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PETER PILGRIM.

BY DR. BIRD.

AUTHOR OF "NICK OF THE WOODS," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PETER PILGRIM.

CHAPTER INTRODUCTORY.

“ TRAVELLERS,” quoth Rosalind, the wise and the witty, “ have great reason to be sad ;” an assurance to which I know not whether I feel inclined to subscribe assent or not ; the opinion of the world, (and to the opinions of the world I always endeavour, as a modest man, to square my own,) judging from the world’s practice, being directly the reverse. To travel is to gain experience, (so runs the argument ;) and to have experience is to have that which makes us sad.

To travel is undoubtedly to put ourselves

in the way of experience, since every highway of the world may be said to be paved with it ; but the task of picking it up, while thundering along at the locomotive speed of modern travel, is no easy matter, even to a philosopher ; and as for travellers in general, the multitudes of busy idlers, who “ sell their own lands to see other men’s,” rambling up and down with no better or wiser motives than a mere rage after novelty, and the ambition to do what their betters have done before them—to talk bad French in the Palais Royal, and swim in a gondola at Venice—it is, this same experience, a kind of lumber with which they would be little likely to burthen themselves, were it even to blow up in their faces like dust, at every turn of their chariot wheels.

It is only the man of Jaques’s temper whom travel makes sad. He who is of a humour to see things on the dark side, to moralise instead of admiring, will find occasion enough for melancholy. To such a man, every inch of the earth’s surface is pregnant with thought, every scene has its record, every countenance its

lesson ; thought, record, and lesson being, for the most part, of a very sombre and lugubrious character. To travel is, in such a case, only to become better acquainted with human folly, to ponder more deeply on the extraordinary perversity of a race which, with the means of making a paradise of the globe, its glorious dwelling-place, has laboured for sixty centuries to convert it into a house of mourning, and having succeeded, is still toiling with might and main to keep it so. It is to force upon the mind those dreary recollections of the past, those dark forebodings of the future—revelments and portents of human destiny—which are so painful to the heart, so humiliating to the pride, I may even add, so terrific to the imagination, of him who loves, or would love, his species. To be a Jaques, however, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand. The multitude know nothing of moralising ; and sadness and grieving—unless when one sighs over a long reckoning, or groans at a bad dinner—form no part of the catalogue of a traveller's grievances. It may be, as Rosalind

says, that travellers *have reason* to be sad ; but it is very certain that they are not, and will not be, sad.

But whatever may be the philosophy of the matter, men were born to travel. The erratic propensity is a part of human nature ; and were it not for a dearth of means, (and here one may see the excellent uses even of so cursed a thing as poverty,) we should have the whole world shooting madly out of its sphere, all mankind gadding together to Rome and Paris, and not a soul left minding its business at home. Every one longs to see the world ; there is pleasure, there is distinction, nay, there is power in it. What importance may not a man assume who can say, “ Thus they do in Rome,” “ It is so and so in Athens ;” who can tell the architect of brick houses of the dome of St. Peter’s and the columns of the Parthenon ; inform builders of wooden bridges how the Romans constructed triumphal arches ; and instruct projectors of water-works for supplying a city with portable liquid, how heathen Copts bale out the Nile with buckets. Who

so irresistible in the drawing-room as the happy youth who can expatiate on Alp and Appenine, the Isles of Greece and the Mother of Nations, the Memnon and the Pyramids, the Dead Sea and the City of the Cross? Black Othello had never eclipsed his Venetian rivals in the love of the fair Desdemona, had it not been for his "travel's history," his ravishing accounts of the "Anthropophagi, and men whose heads did grow beneath their shoulders."

To the dignity which belongs to the travelled man, I, Peter Pilgrim, (otherwise Palmer, which means pretty much the same thing,) of Pilgrimdale, may lay claim in an eminent degree; having, as I may say, visited nearly every place of note in the whole world, ancient or modern—Rome and Jerusalem, Carthage, Troy, Alexandria, Memphis, Palmyra, Canton, Lima, Mexico, Paris, London, and heaven knows how many more besides; all which, to make the wonder more wonderful, I have visited without so much as stirring beyond the bounds of the United States: a fact which proves the convenience of the practice prevailing among

us, (though decried by some injudicious people on account of its servility,) of helping ourselves, when we have new towns to name, to the best names on which we can lay our hands; for hereby may a man perform the grand tour without putting himself to any great trouble or cost, or losing much time in the expedition.

In truth, my travelling propensities have never been of a truly cosmopolitan character; and my ambition to see the world has been destitute of some of the features that mark the ambition of the many. Crowds delight not me, nor the places where crowds most do congregate; and when the impulse of peregrination drives me into the world, it is commonly into some part of the world deserted by other travellers; where, among sequestered roads and shrines unknown, I feel as much delight as others experience in crowded highways and among places of renown. In youth, my inclinations always led me to solitary and out-of-the-way places, instead of to those most universally seductive to schoolboy brains: while my

schoolmates were performing their pilgrimages to the most celebrated orchard or hen-roost, I, led by some irresistible influence, preferred to go dabbling in the marshes for plovers' eggs and flag-roots; and visited the flying-squirrel in his woody den, whilst they were rushing pellmell into a farmer's melon-patch.

The propensity of youth becomes the passion of manhood; and hence behold me still a gatherer of plovers' eggs and flag-roots, though on a larger scale. My ancient mates desert the orchard and hen-roost, to wander over blue Lemans, rolling Rhines, soaring Alps; whilst I, wandering still further from the highway, go seeking the lovelier waters, the nobler streams, the almost equally magnificent mountains, concealed in our own green forests at home.

Among the varied scenes of our own wide-spread and buxom sovereignties I have begun my pilgrimage; being somewhat of Goldsmith's opinion, that—for travellers as well as patriots—

“ Our first, best country, ever is at home ;”—

and that a man who is bent on seeing the world, can do nothing better or wiser than begin the enterprise by making the acquaintance of his own native land. In our own deep forests, on our own bright savannas, our mighty rivers and lakes, among the wild men and wild scenes the traveller must here so often encounter, I have found, and still find, a charm, an endless fund of interest ; which, if it be of a different character from that yielded by old world travel, is none the less agreeable. I find not, indeed, the memorials and things of fame that “re-nown” the roads of Europe ; no monkish ruins in the vale, no toppling castle on the crag, to tell the tale of man’s early baseness, his rapine and superstition ; no array of pomp and splendour to stir the soul to servile admiration or cut-throat envy. None of these attractions—mementos of a past of folly and depravity—await us at home. Antiquity has little to do with America : we find her, an obscure, shapeless, vanishing phantom, only in the forest, under the shade of magnolias and cypresses, that have overgrown and buried, fathoms deep,

all vestiges of the past. And it is in the forest, where man struggles with nature for empire, and where, as if magic ruled the day, as soon as an oak falls to the ground, a city sprouts up from its roots,—and in man, the worker of the marvel, that we must look for the objects of interest to replace those the foreign traveller finds, and ponders over, full of thoughts that everybody else has thought before him, in climes beyond the sea.

In these my peregrinations, I have had with me my pilgrim's srip, being a sufficient satchel of buckram and leather, into which I did not fail to cast whatsoever little treasures it was my fortune to pick up on the way—flowers from the forest, shells from the river, pebbles from the lake ; or, in plainer language, sketches of scenery and character, life and manners ; anecdotes, legends, observations ; everything, in short, that was interesting in itself, or illustrative of points of interest in the regions through which it was my lot to pass.

From this collection, which several years of travel have seen swell into magnitude, I

have selected the materials of the present volumes ; which, if they do not instruct—as, indeed, they do not aim to do—may yet amuse an hour of idleness.

THE LEGEND

OF

MERRY THE MINER.

CHAPTER I.

THE central region of the United States, embracing the district of East Tennessee and the adjacent mountain counties of Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina, is less known to Americans generally than the remotest nooks of Florida, or the North West Territory. At a distance from the great routes of travel, without navigable rivers, presenting on every side a frowning barrier of wild and savage mountains, heaped in continuous and inextricable confusion over its whole surface, a portion of it, too, still

in the hands of its aboriginal possessors,* it has repelled, rather than invited, visitation, and retains an air of solitude and seclusion, which will vanish only when the engineer has tracked its glens and gorges with paths of iron, and flying locomotives thunder along its ridges. When that period shall have arrived, it will perhaps be discovered, that no part of the United States offers greater attractions to the lovers of the picturesque and the wonderful, that none opens a grander display of scenery, or richer exchequer of curiosities. Then, too, perhaps—if the bursting of the world into his sequestered valley should arouse some sleepy inhabitant of Tennessee from inglorious inactivity, infuse into his breast a little pride of country, a little shame that a clime so fair and beneficent should want a historian, that a state so powerful and distinguished should have produced no son able or willing to write the records of her days of trial and adventure—it will be found that no part of the country pos-

* In the hands of its original possessors no longer :

“ The stranger came with iron hand,” &c.

sesses a greater or more interesting fund even of legendary and historic incident. The sparklings of the lost Pleiad of American states—the little republic of *Frankland*, that scintillated a moment on that ridgy horizon, and then was extinguished for ever—and the campaigns of the gallant Sevier, are worthy to be chronicled with the strangest vicissitudes, and the bravest achievements, of that eventful era.

The ‘rarities,’ as the old geographers would have termed them, of this mountain land, comprise waterfalls, (the Tuccoa and the Falling Water, for example—with others, perhaps, as grand and as lovely,) whirlpools and sinking rivers, cliffs, and caverns; and the still more interesting memorials of antiquity, the mounds and fortifications; the painted cliffs; the rocks on which the eye, or the imagination, traces the foot-prints of shodden horses, and even the tracks of wheeled carriages; the grave-yards of pigmies and giants, whence have been dug so many thousand bones of manikins of two feet in stature, and Patagonians of

eight;* the axes and other implements of copper, brass, iron, and silver; the coins; the walled wells; the old gold mines, with furnaces and crucibles; the yellow-haired mummies; and other vestiges of the unknown and perished races of men that once possessed, it would seem, the whole Mississippi valley.

Of these relics many are found in the caves, which, besides the above-mentioned yellow-haired mummies and Cyclopean skeletons, (for

* The belief in the former existence of races of pigmies and giants in the Mississippi Valley is extremely prevalent in many Western communities; though the visits of scientific men to the cemeteries of the former have been productive of results that have shaken the faith of many in regard to the pigmies. The celebrated graveyard on the Merameg river, in Missouri, was examined by some of the scientific gentlemen attached to Long's Expedition, who found bones of men and infants of the ordinary Indian races in great abundance, but no others. Bones from the Lilliputian graves in White County, Tennessee, have also been proved to belong to mortals of ordinary stature. The facts have not been so satisfactorily settled in relation to the giants. There are thousands of respectable men in Kentucky and Tennessee, who aver that they have disinterred, and measured, human bones that must have belonged to individuals eight feet in height; but none of these bones have ever come in the way of savans.

the big bones are usually, though not exclusively, found in caverns,) are, in some cases, reported to possess still more astonishing monuments of the primeval world—petrified *men*—stony warriors and hunters of the days of Nimrod, who, with dog and spear, chased the *megalonia* into his hole, and there perished with him; or antediluvian gold-miners that plied their trade in these darksome retreats, and, in unholy passion, “forgot themselves to marble,” or were transformed by the demons of the mine into their own effigies.

Such wild stories, frequently revived, and passing from mouth to mouth, with various additions or diminutions, though regarded as novelties, I suspect, must in some way or other owe their origin to one common source, to some fragmentary hint or distorted reminiscence of the ancient, veritable, but now almost forgotten legend of *Merry the Miner*—a wight of whose adventures I have been at the pains to inquire and record every particular that is now remembered.

Of the birthplace and early adventures of

this remarkable personage nothing is known ; even his “given” name has been lost, his surname only surviving, with the suffix that supplies the place of the lost portion. He first appeared at a very early day, in one of the extreme eastern counties of Tennessee, a settler like others, as it seemed ; for he had a wife and family, with whom he seated himself, or perhaps *squatted*, upon a farm that might, though none of the richest, have yielded him a comfortable subsistence, had he taken the pains to cultivate it.

But Merry, it soon appeared, had other thoughts and objects ; for, having completed a rude cabin sufficient to shelter his children, cleared for them a few acres of ground, and helped them to set it in corn, for the winter’s subsistence, he straightway seemed to discharge from his mind all further care of them, and began to ramble up and down the mountains, a bag slung upon one shoulder, a rifle on the other, remaining absent from home generally all day long, and sometimes a week together. At first he was supposed by his few neigh-

bours, who noted his proceedings, to be absent on hunting expeditions, until it was observed that he seldom returned so well provided with game as with fragments of stone and minerals, with which useless commodities his sack was usually well filled.

This produced questions, and questions brought replies; and Merry, who, though absorbed by his pursuits, was not of a selfish or incommunicative disposition, gave them to understand he had better game in view than bear, elk, or deer; in short, that he was hunting for gold; with which precious metal, he averred, these very mountains abounded; a fact of which, he declared, with a great deal of wild enthusiasm, he was very sure; for, first, an old Cherokee Indian had told him so when he was a boy; secondly, a great scholar had assured him of the same thing, declaring that the Spaniards had once, in the days of De Soto, been at the mountain mines and worked them, till the Indians drove them away, or killed them: thirdly, his father, who had, in his time, been an Indian trader, and

made a fortune thereby, was of the same opinion, because of the jealousy of the Indians, who would never suffer a white man to examine too closely into their soil for minerals;* and finally, because every one knew there were bits of gold sometimes found in Virginia and the Carolinas, along the rivers that flowed from the mountains, from which it was plain the gold must have been washed down *from* the mountains. To this he added, that he had himself been, for ten years or more, hunting for the precious place of deposit, and it was, therefore, but reasonable to suppose he must soon succeed in finding it. He had often discovered places where there was a little gold to be gathered, but it was a very little: and he should not stop short till he had lighted on the true mines that had been worked of old by the Spaniards, the discovery of which would certainly be a fortune to him.

This representation had its effects upon Merry's friends, who, being shown a store of

* This jealousy was remarked, many years since, by Bartram in his rambles among the Cherokee mountains.

minerals gathered by himself in different places, and abounding, as he said, in lead, copper, and other ignoble metals, together with sundry touchstones, a blowpipe, a bottle of acid, and other simple implements of the art metallurgic, of which he had in some way learned the use, were very ready to assist him in a pursuit that promised to lead to fortune; and for a few months, the whole neighbourhood was rambling with him over the hills in search of hidden treasures. As no gold was, however, found, nor, indeed, the least sign of any, the enthusiasm for gold-hunting soon abated in all but Merry himself, who, at first deserted by his friends, was at last derided by them as a crack-brained schemer, whose efforts were more likely to ruin a fortune than to make one.

It appeared, indeed, from some expressions of Merry's wife, who by no means relished her husband's neglect of his family and affairs, that he had already, or his family for him, paid dearly for his gold mine, having been originally the possessor of a sufficient and comfortable

estate, a good patrimonial farm, and slaves to till it; all which had slipped through his fingers in the course of his ten years' wanderings.

Desertion and derision, however, produced no change in honest Merry, who having remained long enough in his first seat to explore every nook and cranny among the adjacent hills, and to satisfy himself that the object of his search was not there, drew up his stakes one fine morning, removed his habitation some fifty or sixty miles further west, and there, having constructed another cabin, and cleared another field, recommenced his explorations precisely as he had done before, and with exactly the same results; except that on this, as well as on all future occasions, his character having travelled before him, he found no neighbours willing to unite with him in his enterprise. But this was an affair of no consequence to Merry the Miner, who, equable and contented on all subjects except that of his gold mine, was equally satisfied to share his hopes and labours with others, or to enjoy them alone. Nor did the

ridicule and general contempt under which he fell, much affect him : "By-and-bye," said he, "I shall find a gold mine, and then they will treat me well enough."

The reproaches of his dear spouse were not always received with the same equanimity ; but the practice which caused them was the surest means to avoid them ; and accordingly some of the uncharitable have hinted, that if his golden monomania had not been enough to drive him from his habitation, the lectures of his helpmate would have been cause sufficient.

Again unsuccessful, again the untiring Merry changed his quarters ; and this he continued to do year after year, until he had consumed ten more years in the unavailing search. By this time his spirit was fainting a little within him, and doubts began to oppress him sore. Gray hairs were thickening on his temples, and his fortune was not yet made ; on the contrary, poverty, after many premonitory knocks, had passed his door, and taken the best seat on his hearth. His children had grown up, and grown up unaccustomed to rule, at least for

the five last years ; for, five years before, Merry had followed his wife to the grave ; after which her children took matters into their own hands, and grew up the way they liked best. One after another, they dropped away from their father to seek their own fortunes, until at last, one—one only of all remained, his youngest daughter, who was handsome and, as Merry thought, good, for she was faithful when the rest were found wanting. “Very well,” said Merry, as he again trudged to the mountains one bright morning, “when I find a gold mine, she shall know what it is to be a good daughter, for she shall have it all to herself. No, not all,” he muttered ; “for the rest will come back, and they must have something, to know their father was hunting gold, not for himself, but for them. But Susie, my darling Susie, shall have the most of it, because she was faithful to her father.”

When Merry returned again from the mountains, his darling Susie was gone—gone with a villain, for whom she had forsaken her parent. Merry sat down in his deserted cabin, and there

remained for a week, content, for the first time in twenty years, to remain at home, when home had nothing further to attract him.

On the seventh day, Merry again seized his sack and rifle, and whistling to his dog Snapper, for so he called him, an ugly, starveling cur that had long been his companion, and now was the only living thing upon whose fidelity he knew he could rely, made his way up the wild little valley in which his cabin stood, following the course of a brawling river that watered it. This river, fed by a hundred brooks that came chattering down the sides of the mountain, in whose cloven and contorted flank the little vale was one of many embayed recesses, Merry had often before threaded, examining its different forks up to their springs; where—upon his principle of belief, that when gold is found in a river, it must have been washed down from its sources—he always seemed to think there was the best prospect of discovering his long-sought mine. He had thus followed them all, or thought he had done so; and having found them all equally desti-

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tute of treasure, he would himself, perhaps, have been puzzled to say why he now set out again in the same direction. Another person, however, might have found a sufficient explanation in the agitation of mind of the poor wanderer, whose every look and step bore witness to the disorder of his spirits.

Up this rivulet, then, he wandered, without well knowing or noting whither; clambering up the ledgy banks of one of its chief springs, now nearly dried up, which he began, after a time, to have a vague suspicion he had never before explored. It had a new, fresh look about it that gradually wrought upon his attention, and was fast wakening him from abstraction; when his reverie was further put to flight by Snapper, the dog, who set up a yelp or howl, Merry knew not which, but it sounded very wild and mournful in that desolate place, and fell to scratching in the shingly bed of the torrent, as if disinterring a rat, or some other object of equal interest, ever and anon looking around to his master, as if to invite him to his assistance.

Merry approached and took from under the paw of the dog a bit of stone, or sparry concretion, of a very odd appearance, having a kind of rude resemblance to a thumb and fingers grasping something between them, and that something exhibiting, at a broken corner, a certain yellow gleam that made Merry the Miner's heart leap within him.

With a little hammer drawn from his bag, he broke off the ragged superfluities incrusting what seemed a metallic core, an edge of which he straightway rubbed on his flinty touchstone. It left a yellow trace, as clear and brilliant as heart could desire. Merry drew out a vial of acid, and his hand trembled as he applied it to the yellow trace. The yellow trace vanished—No! it was the dimness that came over the miner's eyes; the yellow trace remained as bright and as beautiful as before. He dipped the corner of the mineral into the acid; it hissed and fumed and bubbled; but the yellow speck became the broader and brighter. It was gold then—'gold, yellow, glittering, pre-

cious gold !' and Merry—But hark ! Snapper howls again, and again tears up the pebbles of the brook ! Merry clapped his prize into his sack, and clambered up higher after the dog, admiring at his own happiness in possessing an animal of such marvellous sagacity, perhaps wondering, too, how such an ugly brute should know pebbles of gold from any others, and more especially how he should know his master was seeking after them.

But Merry the Miner's mind was too full of more important matters to question or wonder long over the mystery. Snapper had scratched from the shingle another specimen, and one far more satisfactory and valuable than the former—a lump of virgin gold as big as a pigeon's egg, and looking not unlike one, except that it was marked all over with strange figures and fantastic shapes, so that Merry almost doubted whether it was not a work of art, instead of a freak of nature. But while he was doubting, Snapper scratched again, and Merry picked up another piece ; and then another, and another,

in all five or six pieces, though none of them at all comparable in size and value with the two pieces first stumbled on.

Had they been less numerous or less precious than they were, however, Merry would have rejoiced none the less. He had struck the path of fortune at last, and knew the goal could not now be far off. Too eager to waste time in hunting what he doubted not was a mere subordinate and chance deposit of fragments washed down from above, he gave over the search, to continue his explorations up towards the source of the brook.

As he rose, eager and exulting, his eye fell by chance upon the little valley in which he lived, now far below, and upon his distant and deserted cabin. He sat down and wept. What did gold avail him *now*? He had found the long-desired treasure; but his children were lost to him for ever. For this, then, he had bartered them away—squandered the rich treasures of their love, and, worse than all, the rich treasures of honour and virtue, of re-

putation and happiness, that should have formed their inheritance.

Many a man has felt, and many will feel, like Merry the Miner, when, after a life of gold-hunting, whether in the field or the counting-house, in the land-office or the stock-market, the prize is won, and *they* lost who might have been good and happy without it.

Bitter were the thoughts of Merry, and he looked upon his prizes with the feelings of a Timon. He cursed them; nay, he snatched them up with a desperate intent to hurl them away; when Snapper fetched another howl, and—and Merry the Miner forgot his anger and his grief. He clapped the golden fragments into his sack, added another piece of gold to his store, and, having now lost sight of his cottage, followed, with Snapper, up the mountain brook, exploring with eager care, and impatient to arrive at its golden springs.

The way was long, the path was wild, and the sun was in the meridian when Merry reached the apparent source of the streamlet; and

he was then in the heart of a mountain wilderness, as wild, as desolate, and as solitary, as imagination ever painted. High in air, shut up among ridges that sloped up to heaven all around him, bristled over with black firs, or speckled with gray rocks and precipices, no companions but his dog, and the eagles that sometimes swooped down from adjacent peaks to view the invader of their realm, Merry might have felt the elation inspired by a scene so august and lonely, had not the feeling of the mine-hunter swallowed up every other. His good luck had departed from him; he had trudged miles without finding any further traces of gold, or indeed anything at all remarkable, save fragments of spar and stalagmitic concretions, in which fancy traced a thousand resemblances to objects he had left in the world behind him, as well as to others that existed only in the world of dreams. These, interesting as they might have proved on another occasion, Merry would now have joyfully exchanged for a single bit of gold, the smallest that miner ever picked out of earth. But the gold had vanish-

ed, and Merry arrived at the head of his rivulet, only to be persuaded he had arrived in vain.

A deep and narrow ravine, up which he scrambled with infinite labour and pain, and down which the feeble and dwindling waters seemed to find it as difficult to flow—for lazily, and with complaining murmurs, they dropped from rock to rock, creeping and moaning among obstructions, over which, it was plain, at other seasons, a torrent came bounding and roaring like a lion after his prey—its lofty walls growing loftier as the miner advanced, and flinging a gray and smoky midnight over all below,—was suddenly terminated by a precipice, from whose inaccessible heights the stream fell in a dreary, ever-pattering but meagre shower, while a still feebler runnel oozed from a chasm in the precipice, as if flowing from a spring in the heart of the mountain.

Upon examining this chasm a little, there came from it a faint, icy breath of air: Merry was surprised to find it the entrance of a cavern

—a huge, yawning antre as black as death, and gloomy, ruinous, and mouldering as a sepulchre of a thousand years. Merry cared not a whit for caverns, great or small; and as the feeble ray of light admitted from the ravine did not penetrate beyond a few feet, and disclosed a formidable labyrinth of rocks and stalagmites covering the watery floor, he felt no great desire to disturb its solemn privacy. But Merry was heated and wearied by his toilsome ascent of the mountain, and the cool air of the cavern tempted him to enjoy a moment of repose. He sat down upon a rock, and endeavoured with his eyes to fathom its hidden recesses, but in vain. Nothing was to be seen but the formidable rocks and stalactites, and these all vague, shadowy, and undistinguishable. But the ray of light, imperfectly disclosing the darksome labyrinth, revealed, almost under his feet, another object neither formidable nor repulsive—a little topaz-hued star glistening on the floor, from which Merry eagerly snatched it up, and carried it to the

light of day. It was gold—a rounded mass inferior in size only to the pigeon's egg, and bright and pure as gold could be.

CHAPTER II.

IN a moment the cavern lost its funereal gloom, and shone upon Merry's imagination a palace of light and loveliness, fit for the residence of the gnome-king. The trunk of a mountain pine, shivered by a tempest, had fallen into the ravine, where it still lay, a magazine of ready-made torches provided for any one willing to enter into the mystic abyss.

With the hatchet, which always formed a part of his equipments, Merry easily succeeded in riving off a bundle of resinous splinters. A flint and steel afforded the means of striking a light ; and flambeau in hand, his gun being left, as an encumbrance, in the ravine, Merry immediately crept through the tall, narrow fissure

into the cave ; though his dog Snapper, daunted by its repulsive appearance, refused to follow him. He remained at its entrance, filling the air with doleful howlings, as his master vanished in the gloom ; and with these ominous sounds in his ears, multiplied and variously uttered, as they were, by the echoes of the cave, Merry bade farewell to his companion and the world of light.

Even with the torch flaming in his hand, Merry's eyes failed to reach the boundaries of the cave, its walls being nowhere visible except immediately behind him, where they parted away, right and left, from the entrance—itsself a blind, twisted gap, perceptible only at the distance of a few feet—to be almost immediately lost in darkness. Nothing, indeed, could be well said to be visible, except a few rugged pillars rising here and there among rocks and spars of all imaginable sizes, piled and tumbled together in inconceivable confusion, and presenting such fantastic shapes as both kindled the imagination and struck the spirit with awe. To Merry, who paused for a moment aghast,

it seemed as if each rock was composed of animals, or parts of animals, each a congeries of limbs, heads, trunks, skeletons, cemented or incrustated together in one hideous organic mass. Here glared the head of a panther from among the ribs of an elephant; there an alligator peeped from the back of a horse; here a boa constrictor writhed under the shattered body of an ox; and there a great sea-fish opened her yawning jaws, in which bears and monkeys made their den. Nay, Merry even fancied that, embedded in these frightful concretions, he could behold the limbs and heads of human beings, the former crushed and sprawling, the latter staring ghastly out with eyes of stone.

While Merry paused a moment, confounded by these strange appearances, and doubtful whither to proceed in search of the golden stream, which was now lost among the rocky apparitions, he heard it faintly murmuring in the distance, at a point to which he did not hesitate to direct his steps, and where he had soon the satisfaction to discover it flowing down

a broad staircase of rock, as regular almost as if cut by the hands of man.

Here Merry again paused, nay, recoiled a moment in consternation ; for upon that staircase stood the gigantic figure of a man, grim, shadowy, terrible, his countenance, as far as a countenance could be seen that was, like his whole body, incrustated over with stone, convulsed with some nameless agony, and his attitude, which was that of flight—of flight arrested by a sudden spell that had bound his limbs as with fetters of iron—expressive of a deep but majestic despair. A tunic, sustained by a broad baldrick ; sandals, or what seemed sandals, upon his feet ; and in his hand the massive hilts of a sword, whose blade had long since rotted away, were the only accoutrements on a shape in whose very nakedness there was something august and commanding.

Merry's hair bristled as he surveyed the stony phantom ; but by-and-bye, convinced that it was no living creature, and moved by curiosity, he approached, and even mustered courage

to touch the unconscious frame. It was, as it seemed, a figure of stone, but how formed Merry the Miner was not learned enough to tell: as he felt, however, the vast limbs, foully sheeted over with spar, a rough and rigid coat formed by the drippings and deposits of centuries, he could not but fancy a human body was sepulchred within.

Merry the Miner forgot his gold, and his hopes of gold. Wonder and curiosity absorbed his spirit. He thought now only of investigating a mystery so strange and so new, of prosecuting still further a discovery whose first fruits were so astonishing. He ascended the wet and mouldering staircase. Twenty steps brought him to its summit, where stood another colossal figure struggling in the grasp of a third that lay upon its face, half buried under a mound of stalagmite that had grown around it, its arms twined round his legs, its hair, long and flowing like the locks of a woman, trodden under his feet, with which he seemed endeavouring to spurn the prostrate shape away. It was a ghastly picture of terror overpowering the fee-

ble and unmanning the strong, of selfishness converting woman's love and man's devotion into frenzied contention and brutal hate.

A new spectacle now drew Merry's eyes from this unnatural group. The last step of the staircase was ascended, and there yawned upon him a new cave, more vast than that he had left below, and filled with spectres more wonderful and appalling; rank upon rank, crowd upon crowd, multitude upon multitude, they burst upon his view, the stony effigies and relics of pre-Adamitic ages, the remains and representatives of all races that had lived and perished. It was a world of stone—a petrified world; and Merry felt, as the clang of his footsteps awoke the funeral echoes of the place, and one after another the fearful shapes started into view, that he trod upon accursed ground, among the doomed inhabitants of a demolished sphere.

Were these, then, things of flesh? things that had lived, and breathed, and walked the earth? these things of bulk so enormous, of shapes so strange and fearful? Ay, here they

were—creatures that *had* lived, and breathed, and walked the earth—all in their general sepulchre, not clad alone in the ordinary vestures of decay, in bones and ashes, but in form as when they lived, in body and, it seemed, almost in substance, but grown over each with a mantle of stone, a rime of rock, that converted all into monumental statuary. Here they were, all in wild confusion, all flying in terror from a destiny which had, nevertheless, overtaken them, and all expressing, in their positions, the agony of annihilation. It was a fearful picture of fate, a grand and terrible, yet mournful, revelation of the last moment of a world's perdition.

Merry's flesh again crept on his bones ; but he remembered all was stone around him, and advanced, looking with mingled fear and admiration upon the varied figures occupying this subterraneous world, where all was left as in the moment of destruction, save that the rocks, which had fallen and covered all with a new firmament, had here and there dropped to the floor, forming piles and mounds that crushed

hundreds of animals beneath them, and in other places had poured floods of petrifying moisture that converted groups of bodies into mountains of spar. Here, among strange plants and trees of the primeval forests, whose trunks formed stalactitic pillars supporting the roof, Merry beheld the magnificent monsters first revealed to human eye by the labours of the geologist, though revealed only in fragments—the Mastodon, with his mighty tusks, huge and strong enough to toss a mountain into the air; the Megatherium, with claws to tear up trees, and armour upon his back to sustain them in the fall; the tremendous Dinotherium, with teeth that dredged the bottoms of lakes and rivers, and hooked to some overhanging rock or tree, supported the watery sluggard in his sleep; the great Saurians,—huge and hideously formed reptiles, to which the crocodiles and anacondas of our own day were as earthworms and lizards; with the primordial horse, ox, rhinoceros, and other animals without number and without name; all huddled together, and man their enemy and master, with them, in a confusion of

terror that reduced all to equality and fellowship in misery.

Through this vast hall, following the course of the brook, on which he relied to guide him back to the realms of day, Merry pursued his discovery, examining with interest the various shapes on either side. But by-and-bye they ceased to appear : he had reached the end of the Hall of Flight.

A few steps conducted him into another chamber, where his eyes fell upon a sweeter scene. It was a shepherd watching his flocks, all, shepherd and flocks alike, of stone, and all seeming to have passed to death in a dreamy unconsciousness of their fate. Here terror and anguish were no longer seen ; and Merry fancied he was about to behold the inhabitants of the ancient world in a better aspect, in their natural state and appearance as when they lived. " Yes," quoth he, well pleased at the prospect—for the universal agony he had passed through chilled him to the heart—" I have seen how they died ; I shall now see, perhaps, how they lived."

And so he did ; for having proceeded a few yards further, he found himself upon a huge subterraneous plain, whereon were countless hosts of men, with sword and spear, arrow, javelin, and war-club, with horses and chariots, waging a furious battle ; in the very midst of which their destiny, it seemed, had come upon them. As they were engaged, so they had perished, each his sword at his fellow's throat, trampling under foot and hoof, crushing with chariot wheels, thrusting with lances, piercing with darts and arrows, raging and destroying. Thus it was with them, even with eternity at their elbow, their world falling to pieces under their feet. Upon the borders of death, they were anticipating his coming ; with one foot in the balance of judgment, they were dragging with them the blood of rapine and murder, to weigh them down in condemnation for ever.

“ Ay ! ” quoth Merry the Miner, “ and so they do in the world above ! all busily engaged in cutting short for one another the little moment of life assigned them by nature—all madly eager adding gall and wormwood to the little

cup of happiness their destiny allows them—all hot to prove their supremacy over the beasts of the field, by exceeding them in violence and enmity.”

Through this midnight battle-field Merry made his way among mangled and disfigured corpses, retaining even in stone, with the looks of the dying and of death, vestiges of the passions which impelled them to strife and attended them in slaughter. Here was the fiery youth urged by the love of glory—that love called noble and generous, though it aims at blood, and fills the world with orphans; there the veteran, to whom use had made slaughter an exciting pastime. Here was the soldier fighting for his sixpence; there the great captain leading up a thousand men to die in a ditch, that he might go down to future ages renowned in story. Here was seen the throttle of hate, the grasp of rage and desperation; there the wounded besought quarter which the victor denied, and here the victor himself, at last perishing, seemed to entreat of Heaven the mercy he had denied his fellows; while the con-

tortions of agony and despair spoke the late but unavailing remorse of the dying. In short, it was a battle-field, in which Merry the Miner, as he himself hinted in his half-muttered apostrophe, saw nothing that he might not have seen in a 'foughten field' in the world above.

By-and-bye he had passed it through, glad to escape its shocking spectacles. He then entered a passage looking like the broad street of a half-ruined city, with houses on either side, some overthrown, some sheeted over with spar, but all wild, and antique, and strange-looking, like the buried structures of Herculaneum, or still more the ancient subterranean cities of the East.

Here the first sight that struck Merry's eyes was a knot of ferocious looking men, sitting round a slab of stone, gambling; at least, so they appeared to Merry, to whom the avaricious exultation of one, who held aloft what seemed a bag of coin just won; the despairing looks of a second, who clasped his hands in the frenzy of conscious ruin; the scowl of a third, who seemed also a loser; with the villany

of a fourth, who, while appearing to sympathise on one side of his face with the winner, on the other with the losers, was slyly abstracting a second bag of money from the table,—were proofs of the nature of their employment not to be mistaken.

Merry saw and felt the moral of the scene. He was struck with the brutal triumph of the winner, whose happiness was the misery of at least one other; with the humiliating grief of that other; with the frowning ferocity of the third man, who looked as if thirsting for the blood of the victor; above all, with the base roguery of the fourth, who made no difficulty of stealing the treasure he could not otherwise hope to master.

Merry the Miner saw and felt all this; and could, had any one been by, have moralised very prettily on the debasing effects of avarice. But while he saw and felt, and was able to moralise, the very passion he saw thus variously personified, stole into his bosom, and he longed to possess the bags of coin so temptingly displayed. He forgot he was among the dead of

a doomed world, and was again a gold-hunter. He snatched at the bag in the winner's hand ; but bag and hand were alike marble. He drew his hammer, and with a blow shattered the arm of the gambler ; and down it dropped, with dismal clanging, on the stone floor. Another blow crushed the hand and bag to pieces, and Merry's hopes were gratified. Out rolled upon the floor a nest of antique golden coins, which Merry, after admiring a moment, clapped into his sack, among his other treasures. He then attacked the second bag, and after a deal of hammering, for it was fast cemented to the stone table, succeeded in breaking it also, and seizing its precious contents.

Merry proceeded onward, swelling with hope and joy. He had forgotten his wonder and curiosity about the ancient world, and its strange discovery ; his thoughts were now not of the sins and destruction of its people, but of their wealth, of which he deemed himself the heir apparent.

His next step brought him to a booth or shop, where stood—was it a money-changer,

or an old clothesman and pawnbroker? Merry could not tell, for the booth was half filled up with petrification, which encased the old man up to the middle, and held also a customer, a poor old tattered woman, glued to his shopboard; but it is quite evident the hoary sinner was cheating her—selling her the ragged mantle he held in his hand for twenty times its value, or buying it—if a buyer—at as great a profit.

“How strange and pitiable,” quoth Merry the Miner, “that men should cheat for money—grind, fleece, cozen, rob—nay, rob even the poor!” With these words, he knocked from the shopman’s girdle, where it hung suspended, a purse of gold, the only valuable in the booth, which, as far as Merry could discover, the petrified flood had not swallowed up.

The next sight struck him with horror. It was a footpad rifling the body of a man whom he had just murdered by beating out his brains with a club.

“How vile,” quoth Merry the Miner, “must be that love of gold which drives men to rob-

bery and murder !” Thus venting his indignation, he smote from the robber’s fist the fruits of his double crime, and transferred them to his own pocket.

A few more steps, and Merry found himself in a market, or other public place, where, among a multitude of people chaffering after pennies with as much eagerness as if salvation were in them, sat judges upon tribunals, dealing out justice, and some of them, as Merry thought, dealing it out at a very good price. Certainly, he saw one very patriarchal looking old gentleman fulminating the terrors of the law, with one hand outstretched against an unhappy complainant, whilst the other, extended behind him, was receiving a *douceur* dropped into it by the richer defendant. At another tribunal stood a man, evidently a bankrupt, dragged by clamorous creditors before the tribunal, yet escaping their demands by an oath of destitution, which he confirmed by raising his hands to heaven, thereby disclosing a well-crammed purse concealed under his mantle.

“And men will even commit perjury for

money!" thought Merry, who, as he helped himself to the wages of corruption and perjury, began to feel somewhat uneasy at these exemplifications of the effects of the love of gold upon human nature. He turned to the market-house, and there beheld a father selling his children into slavery, a mother bartering away her daughter for a price. In short, he saw enough to convince him that man's god was gold; and of all gods it demanded the richest sacrifices of its votary—the sacrifice of his head and heart, of his honour, virtue, happiness—nay, of his soul itself.

Merry's uneasiness increased. "Truly," quoth he, "if men will do these things for gold, it must be a cursed thing. How know I that it will not enchant *me* also into villany?" He began to ask himself whether *he* had never defrauded, robbed, murdered, borne false witness, or done other evil for lucre's sake. It was a great satisfaction to him to be assured that he had not, and to believe he never could. Nevertheless, he could not divest himself of a

degree of consternation, that fastened upon his spirit, while yielding himself to a passion whose debasing effects upon others he saw pictured around him in acts of meanness and iniquity of every grade and dye.

He could not divest himself of his fear ; but neither could he divest himself of his covetousness ; and he accordingly went on his way, exploring the buried city, and ravishing the treasures of the dead, of which, having prodigious success, he soon collected more than he could carry, or his sack contain ; so that he was obliged to empty it twice or thrice on the path, leaving shining heaps, which he designed to remove afterwards at his leisure.

His success was the greater for his having, after a time, hit upon a new branch of exploration. He had often looked with a curious eye upon the buildings that bounded the street on either side, huge, strange structures, here lying in ruins, there still standing, but almost lost under thick shrouds of spar. It struck him that if he could by any means make his

way into the interior of these houses, he might light upon treasures of much more value than all the purses he could hope to filch from the corpses in the street. Nor was he disappointed; for having at last found houses with penetrable doors, he entered them, looking with awe upon their stony inhabitants, some feasting, or seeming to feast, at rich tables, some sleeping the sleep of death in couches of marble; and with a delight that soon banished his awe, upon the rich golden vessels and ornaments, the treasures of the banqueting-room, for which there was no longer an owner.

Such visits into different houses enabled him rapidly to increase the number of piles, by which he marked his way along the street; though, in his progress, he sometimes stepped into mansions where nothing was gained but wisdom. Once he entered a huge building, in which he anticipated an unusual store of treasure; but found himself in a prison filled with felons expiating in chains crimes, which, for aught he knew, the lust of pelf had driven them

to commit. Another time, he got into a madhouse, where, among other bedlamites raving in stone, was doubtless the usual proportion of cases where the loss of gold, or the fear of losing it, had converted the children of God into gibbering monkeys.

Again, he found himself in a madhouse of another kind, or rather madhouse and prison in one; a hall of legislation, where fools were destroying a nation, and knaves pilfering it, and both parties quarrelling upon the question which best deserved the name of patriots.

CHAPTER IV.

MERRY's next visit was into a mansion of greater importance than any yet entered. It was a royal palace, the court of a pre-Adamitic sovereign ; where, among the ruins of his world, his kingdom, his house, sat the piece of hardened clay that had held itself superior to other clay, which it had worried and agonised, trampled, racked, decapitated, according to its sublime will and pleasure, and been allowed to do so by the other clay, the millions of pieces that owned its rule, because, of all, there was not one shrewd enough to conceive the superior convenience of freedom, or, having conceived it, who was not willing to sell his thought, and his

liberty, for a piece of money. Here sat the monarch surrounded by his court ; his generals who ravaged foreign countries to increase his grandeur, his ministers who plied the besom at home for a similar purpose. Here were his buffoons and parasites, the soft slaves of his pleasure and the instruments of his wrath ; his sellers and buyers of office ; his corruption-mongers and their customers ; his keepers of conscience without conscience, his sages without wisdom, his saints without religion, his friends without love, his servants without faith, prostituted geniuses, bought patriots, rogues' slaves—a mighty herd of servility and corruption. Ay, here they all sat or stood, glorious in the pomp of their golden trappings, which the incrusting waters had not yet hidden entirely from the eye.

Merry the Miner was too good a democrat to be greatly daunted at the sight of a king and court. In truth, he saw nothing so impressive and interesting in a king or courtier, as the golden ornaments on their persons.—Thus it

must be with the glorious, when the unsophisticated make their acquaintance in the grave. The tomb-rat loves your great man only for his tenderer flesh ; and the Arab of the Egyptian catacombs sees nothing in a mummied Pharaoh, but an inflammable backlog for his kitchen fire.

Merry lighted a new pine-knot, and then, with eyes that gloated in joy over the sepulchral yet gorgeous assemblage, fell to work in his vocation of plunder. He yielded royalty so much respectful observance as to commence operations on the monarch's person, knocking from his anointed head the golden crown that none remained to honour or envy, and from his jewelled hand the sceptre that was no longer the talisman of authority. To these the insatiate Merry added the chains of gold and diamonds around his majestic neck : when, having despoiled the flinty monarch of every valuable, he turned to his royal consort and progeny, and to his ministers and flatterers, all of whom he in like manner disencumbered of their jewelled trappings.

And now, after an hour or two of labour hard and unremitting—for it was no easy task to detach the precious relics from their crusts of stone—Merry the Miner paused to congratulate himself upon his success. He looked at his piles with joy; there were enough of them to occupy him a day—nay, many days—in removing them from the cave. He clapped his hands, he laughed, he almost danced; he was a happy man, he was a rich one; “Ay,” quoth he, with exultation, “I am the richest man in the world!”

With that, he sat down to rest his weary bones—for, truly, his labour had well nigh exhausted his strength—and to enjoy in prospect the happiness which such store of wealth seemed to assure him. The delight of reverie was added to the languor of fatigue; and while his imagination took the airiest flights, a pleasant lassitude stole over every limb. It was a strange spectacle he presented, as he sat in that damp charnel-house, where objects, dimly revealed by his torch, put on a double ghastliness—the living man rejoicing over the trea-

asures and hopes, of which the dead around him spoke the hollow vanity. But Merry thought not of the dead ; how could he, whose dreams were of lands and houses—glorious domains spreading around him, with palaces on them, and flocks and herds, and hamlets and villages—nay, towns and cities ; for Merry the Miner was already laying his lands out in town-lots, and calculating the profits of the speculation ; how could *he* think of the dead, or of death ?

No—Merry the Miner troubled himself not at all with the monumental statues around him : but by-and-bye, having at length rested his bones, and settled his plan for doubling his money at the expense of his neighbours, he bethought him of rising, and removing his treasures forthwith from the cave.

He bethought him of rising, and attempted to do so—but in vain. A sudden palsy had seized upon his body ; there was a numbness or stiffness in every joint, and it was increasing every moment. A terrible idea entered his mind : his heart leaped with perturbation—

it seemed almost the only muscle capable of motion. He looked down upon his limbs: they were already thickly crusted over with spar, which the humid atmosphere of the cave was depositing around them with fearful rapidity. He felt the cold stone stiffening on his fingers and freezing on his cheeks. He, also, was becoming a petrification—a man of stone, like all around him! His treasures, his darling treasures, attacked by the subtle vapour, had already vanished from his eyes.

But what cared Merry for treasure *now*? Terror and anguish seized upon his spirit; he gathered all his energies into an effort, and struggled furiously to burst his bonds of stone. As well might the wild-goat struggle in the embrace of an anaconda, a fly in the meshes of a spider. The incrustation crackled around him, and then was firmer than ever: he could neither move hand nor foot: he was a rock, and part and parcel of the rock on which he sat.

Thus a prisoner, a breathing corse, a living fossil, Merry gave himself up to despair, and

raved and shrieked, until affrighted at the echoes of his own voice. It seemed, indeed, as they reverberated among the ruined walls of the palace and through the distant streets, as if all the inhabitants of this petrified world had found their voices, and replied to him with yells as wild as his own. But shrieks and struggles were alike vain; and by-and-bye he found himself deprived of the power even of uttering a cry. The stony concretion was gathering round his throat and jaws, and mounting to his lips; where, though his warm breath had as yet repelled the insidious vapour, it threatened soon to attack him with suffocation. In a few moments, and what would remain of Merry the Miner?

In those few moments, how deep was the agony, how wild the terror, how distracting the thoughts of the unhappy Merry, who now cursed his fate, and now the fatal avarice that provoked it, now thought bitterly of his approaching death, and now still more bitterly of the long life miserably wasted—wasted in a

pursuit which had brought him nothing but woe and ruin. Nothing that was agonising, nothing that was maddening, but Merry the Miner had it passing through his mind in those moments of imprisonment so strange and fearful.

But the stone still grew around him : and by-and-bye, as the incrusting matter thickened at his mouth and nostrils, he felt that he had but another breath to draw, and then perish.

At that moment, the sound of a trumpet, a single, tremendous note, burst through the cave, and Merry's blood froze with fear. That dreadful note seemed to thrill the dead as well as the living. To Merry's eyes, dim and film-ing, but not yet darkened, it seemed as if each statue started with fear ; he heard, or fancied he heard, the rattling of their sparry garments, and a dull sad moan issuing from their marble lips.

Then there flashed into the cave the appearance of a moving fire, in which approached a figure as of a fallen angel, majestic in mien,

terrible yet mournful in aspect, and on his brow the name of the Inexorable, holding in his hand a flaming sword, with which he touched the stony corse one by one, pronouncing the words of condemnation ; and wheresoever he touched, a flame seemed to spring up within the statue, a lurid, tormenting fire, that shone through it as a lamp hidden within an alabaster vase.

“Thou,”—he cried, with a voice as dreadful and mournful as his visage, touching at the same time the monarch, in whose body the fires immediately appeared—“Thou, because thou didst hold thyself as the lord of them thou wast sent to serve ;—Ye”—touching the ministers—“because ye were the tools of his passions, who should have been counsellors of wisdom and goodness ;—Ye”—to the courtiers—“because ye were idolaters and man worshippers ; and so on until he had reached, in his course, the unhappy Merry, who, beholding the sword of the Inexorable thus stretched above his head, at last betook himself for aid to a means which, in his distraction, he had not yet thought of—he

mutttered a prayer, not audibly, for his lips were now sealed, but in the deep recesses of his spirit.

The sword was turned aside ; and with the sad and solemn utterance—"He that hath time left to pray, hath yet time to escape the judgment"—the apparition glided away to resume his judgment of others. The rocky covering at the same moment melted from Merry's body ; and he, forgetting his gold, his implements, his torches—forgetting everything but the terror that infused strength into his liberated limbs, fled from the scene amain. He fled, lighted at a distance by the fires kindled by the Inexorable ; whose voice Merry could long hear pronouncing in the street, the prison, and the city, and upon the battle-field, the words of doom ; "Thou, for thy blood-guiltiness ! Thou, for thy perjury ! Thou, for thy covetousness ! Thou, for thy ambition !" at every word setting some enclosed spirit in flames, until the whole cavern gleamed with the lights of hell.

These lights pursued the flying Merry until he had almost reached the outlet of the cavern ; when the howlings of his faithful dog directed him to the passage. Dashing through the orifice, and scarcely pausing even to catch up his gun, he fled down the ravine and the course of the brook, running like a madman until he reached at length his own deserted home. He entered it a poorer man than he had left it in the morning ; his sack and all the implements of his pursuit having been abandoned in the cave, along with the fragments of gold he had picked up in the brook, not to speak of the more magnificent treasures gathered in the cave itself.

But if Merry the Miner was now a poorer, he was also (or at least he thought himself) a much wiser and better man than he had ever been before. Gold-hunting he immediately forswore, as a soul-endangering occupation ; he became, moreover, exceedingly devout and somewhat industrious, having resolved, as he said, to be content with honest poverty for the remainder of his days.

His story, as might be expected, produced no common sensation among his neighbours, some of whom, to Merry's astonishment and grief, (for he told his story for the purpose, and with the expectation, of deterring them from all covetousness,) proposed to him to conduct them to his wondrous cave ; where, for such a prize as he had abandoned, many of them swore they were willing to face not only his devil, for so they contemptuously called the condemning spirit, but all the devils that were ever heard of. This Merry very resolutely refused to do : he had taken a vow never to go near the place again, putting himself in the way of temptation ; it was as much as his soul was worth. They then bade him instruct them where to find it. This, also, Merry positively declined. Strong in his newborn virtue, he was determined that no unlucky sinner should, through his means, be put in the way of perdition ; he would save the souls of his friends, he declared, as well as his own.

Upon this, his neighbours instituted a search

through the mountains, in hopes of discovering the cave; but, after several weeks of fruitless exploration, gave up the attempt in despair, some of them revenging their failure on Merry by pronouncing him a lunatic and dreamer, and declaring that his whole story, his account of the cave, the treasures, the petrified bodies, and the adjudging angel, was a mere fiction of a distempered brain.

As for Merry himself, he little regarded the imputation, but remained at home, practising those virtues of industry and devotion that seemed to prove him an altered man, until—sorry I am to say it, but so the legend reports of him—he grew tired of them. Whether it was that he found honest poverty by no means so agreeable or profitable as he hoped to prove it—that the devotion begot by fear is not in reality of the most enduring species, or that the impression of his terrible adventure was naturally lessened by time, it seemed that he, by-and-bye, began to neglect his cornfield, to be an irregular and unfrequent visiter at the religious

meetings, which he had for a while faithfully attended, and was again, after a time, seen on his solitary rambles among the mountains.

Yes, Merry the Miner was once more seen with dog and gun wending his way towards the hills ; Merry the Miner had forgotten his religion and his vow, and returned to his original love and ancient passion. He had thought upon the matter, and he thought a happy thought. The cave was accursed and forbidden ground, to be sure, with all its mysterious treasures ; but the brook that rolled from it, bearing coins and jewels, to be scattered unregarded on its bed—there was nothing unholy, nothing perilous in the brook : why should not Merry the Miner lay claim to its unforbidden riches ?

At this thought, Merry the Miner was conquered ; he snatched his gun, he called his dog, and set out in quest of the brook. That brook, however, to his surprise and consternation, was nowhere to be found. There were a thousand brooks rolling down the mountain, but in none could Merry discover the singular runnel of the

cave. In the agitation of his mind, both while going and returning from the cavern, he had forgotten to take any note of the path by which he had reached it; and now the place of the brook, and the features that distinguished it from others, were alike forgotten. Had he lost it then? was he to be denied even the possession of its little treasures?

Merry the Miner waxed wroth with his hard fortune, and took another vow; he swore he would find that brook again, if he sought it to his dying day.

And this vow, it is believed, he religiously kept. Year after year he was seen wending his solitary way up the mountains, exploring every little stream, every foamy torrent, every dried-up channel, with an eager, hopeful eye. Year after year the search was continued, with the same eagerness, the same hope, the same ill fortune. His dog died with old age; Merry himself grew palsied with years; but still, day by day, his thin gray hairs were seen fluttering in the breeze, as he tottered along the mountain paths with zeal, as in his

better years, in quest of the golden brook and perilous cavern.

How long the quest continued, and when or how it ended, no one ever knew. Merry at last vanished from men's eyes, and was seen no more stealing like a ghost among the woods and hills: but what had been his fate could be only conjectured. Some few years after he disappeared, a skeleton was found by a party of hunters in a desolate place among the mountains. It was generally believed to be that of the poor gold-hunter, who had perished in some unknown way in his unfriended rambles.

Others there were who rejected the common belief. According to them, Merry the Miner had again lighted on his long-sought rivulet; had again entered his mystic cave; and would, there, perhaps, be discovered by some future adventurer, a man of stone like the shapes around him.

MY FRIENDS
IN
THE MADHOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

A VISIT TO THE ASYLUM.

I HAVE always been of opinion that madmen are by no means so mad as the world usually supposes them—an idea which, if not originally impressed, was strongly confirmed on my mind by the conduct of a lunatic in a certain asylum, in which it was my chance to be a Rambler and a Looker-on, at a period when the visiting physician was going his rounds, with some five or six score of medical students at his heels. Fol-

lowing this long train of philanthropists through the wards, I enjoyed (if so it could be called) an opportunity of looking into many cells, thrown open only to the medical attendants and their pupils, upon the miserable tenants—victims of mania in every form—whose appearance sometimes shocked, and always saddened, the beholder. Truly we know nothing of the extraordinary structure and tremendous energies of the human mind, that grandest and most amazing of created things, until we see it in ruins.

A more agreeable—or, to speak correctly, less repulsive—spectacle, at least to me, was twice or thrice presented in the persons of lunatics whose malady was of such a harmless character that they, instead of being confined in cells, were allowed to ramble up and down the wards as they pleased, talking with the officers of the asylum, sometimes even assisting them in ministering to their fellow maniacs, and, above all, enjoying themselves in conversation with such visitors as chance threw in their way.

One of these unfortunates, seen on the present occasion for the first time, was a young man of spirited and humorous deportment, who betrayed much satisfaction at the appearance of the physician, shook him heartily by the hand, gave him, without waiting to be asked, his wrist to feel and his tongue to inspect, and then demanded, with a very business-like nod of the head, "Well now, Doctor, what do you think of me? Capital, eh? quite right in the upper story?"

"Oh, certainly, John," replied the physician—"doing extremely well." With which he seemed disposed to pass on. But John was not so easily satisfied.

"None of your quaker answers, if you please, Doctor," quoth he, with a knowing grin; "answer to the point like a gentleman, and don't fob me off like one of your regular madmen. I say, Doctor, what's your idea concerning the state of my cerebellum? Just say the word—am I mad or not?"

“Mad? Oh, no, certainly,” said the physician, smiling; “nobody could think such a fine funny fellow as John mad.”

“I’ll be hanged if you don’t, though!” said John, with the utmost coolness, “and I wonder why you can’t say so, like an honest fellow. But I say, Doctor,” he continued, observing the physician about to pass on a second time, “just answer me another question or two before you go. All these young gentlemen here are young doctors, a’n’t they?”

To this the doctor replied in the affirmative; whereupon John jumped upon a chair, and looking round him with an air of comical solicitude, exclaimed—“Well now, while there’s so many of you present, all doctors, just let’s settle the question by vote. I say, gentlemen,” he cried, “the Doctor thinks I am mad, and I think I am *not*: put it to the vote among you; for, being doctors, and such a heap of you, you’ll know all about it.—Here I am, gentlemen, John Jones by name;—mad, or not mad?”

To this demand several of the young men answered smilingly, in the words of their preceptor, by assuring John he was not mad.

“Gammon !” said John, “or why don’t you *let me out* ? But I tell you what, my gentlemen, you may think me as mad as you please : all that I can say is, I think you just as mad as myself, and—hang it—a great deal madder ; and, what’s more, I can prove it.”

“Very well, John,” said the physician, who seemed amused by the oddity of his patient, and willing to humour him a little ; “if you can prove that, I shall clap them into the cells forthwith, and make you their keeper.”

“It’s a bargain,” said John, turning to the students ; whom he addressed in the following terms, grinning all the time as if with the triumph of anticipated victory.

“Here you are, a hundred or more able-bodied young fellows, inhabitants of a country where labour and industry, always in greater demand than professional science and dignity, always secure the rewards which science does

not—the independence and wealth, which are the great aims of every American. I hold you mad, first, because you have deserted the fields you would have passed useful and happy lives in tilling, to enter upon a professional career in which you will, if you don't starve outright, remain poor unlucky drones for life : secondly, because, if you *must* have a profession, you have chosen the worst of all professions in the world—the poorest in emolument, the lowest in influence, the least in dignity. Had you chosen the law, you might have gabbled and cheated your way to fortune, and to Congress into the bargain ; with divinity, you might have married rich wives and preached bad sermons, in religious contentment to your dying days. Whereas, as doctors, supposing you don't prove, from sheer incompetency, public murderers, you will waste your days in works of humanity, for which you are only half paid, and not thanked at all ; besides being deprived of all those side means of making a fortune, which belong to the other professions. Thirdly and finally, you are

mad, because, if you *will* be doctors, you yet go to the trouble and expense of studying the art; when the world, and the American world in particular, would have liked you just as well, and, indeed, a great deal better, if you had begun to slash and physic, without any study or preparation whatever. Men must be mad, indeed, who will study physic, when they can make a fortune three times as fast by quackery !”

With these words, delivered I knew not whether most to the edification or diversion of the young doctors, who straightway took their departure in search of new patients, honest John descended from his chair, and, clapping his hands into his pockets, began to saunter up and down the passage, whistling Yankee Doodle with great vigour and execution.

I felt desirous of making the acquaintance of a lunatic so very methodical in his madness, and accordingly stepped up to honest John, and assuring him that his oration had quite convinced me of his sanity, and the utter dis-

traction of his scientific hearers, begged to be informed to what cause he owed his incarceration in that abode of the crack-brained.

“Oh,” said John, grinning with delight, (for he was vastly flattered by my complimentary address,) and looking volumes of sagacity—“we have a mode of accounting for it here among us. The world is composed of wise men and madmen, the latter being in the majority—ay, sir, hang it ! a hundred to one, undoubtedly. Well, sir, what can a few wise people do among a myriad of mad ones ? In short, sir, the mad fellows have got the upper hand of *us*, the wise ones, and—here we are in Bedlam !”

“The explanation,” said I, “is both simple and striking. But the mad fellows could not have imprisoned you, unless under some pretext.”

“True,” said John, touching his nose ; “leave madmen alone for that ; everybody knows they are cunning. The pretext is, of course, that I am mad. But the truth is, they clapped me in here on account of my philanthropy, as shown in my extraordinary invention.”

I took the liberty to ask what that invention was; a question that seemed greatly to surprise worthy John, as indicating a very extraordinary degree of ignorance upon my part. But this ignorance he hastened to remove by informing me, that, both as a philanthropist and patriot, he had been grieved by the quarrel betwixt the abolitionists and slave-owners, which appeared to him to threaten the very existence of the republic. "Besides," said he, "I was somewhat of an abolitionist myself, quite desirous to see the poor blackies as free as blackbirds; but then, I saw clear enough, they never could be liberated, without ruining their masters, as well as all the agricultural interests of the South, unless some means could be devised for supplying their loss, by finding substitutes for them. The substitutes once found, I had no doubt everybody would come round to abolition in a moment, the Southerners in particular, who, the Lord knows, are sick of the bother of their labourers. Well, sir," quoth John, "to find these substitutes became the problem to be

solved ; and I solved it, sir, by the invention of my patent niggers to be worked by horse-power—yes, sir, by the invention (and a grand one it was) of patent niggers—men, sir, not of perishing and suffering flesh and blood, but of wood, iron, leather, and canvass, so constructed as (by means of horse-power to put them in motion) to be a great deal better than the real niggers ; because, sir, they were to do all kinds of work, except blacking shoes and feeding the cattle, (upon my soul, sir, I could never make them do *that*,) and never get tired, or sick, or sulky—never die, or run away, or rise in insurrection—never require feeding, nor clothing, nor physicking—in short, sir, the best and cheapest niggers that human wit ever imagined ! With these, sir, my glorious invention, I expected to free the blackies, and make my own fortune ; and accordingly carried my models to the Abolition Society, to get their recommendation ; when, sir, instead of the rapture and triumph which I looked for among the members, rage and jealousy took possession of their souls.

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They could not bear that they should lose the honour, and glory, and profit of completing the great work of emancipation—that I, who was not actually a professed member of their society—or that anybody, save themselves, should reap the splendid reward; and, accordingly, they knocked my models to pieces, maltreated myself, and ended by charging me with madness, and bringing me to this place in a strait-jacket. These, sir, are the true causes of their strange behaviour—jealousy and envy: but it must be remembered, they belong to the majority—that is, to the madmen; and were hence incapable of seeing that, in persecuting me, they were destroying the negro's best friend."

I expressed, as in civility and duty bound, a great deal of surprise and indignation at the hard and undeserved fate of honest John, whose philanthropy was so poorly rewarded; at which appearance of sympathy he was vastly pleased, declared I was the clearest-headed and sanest man he had ever known, begged to swear eternal friendship with me, and then, giving

me to understand there were many other wise and virtuous persons, the victims of the world's malice or insanity, confined like himself in the asylum, proposed to introduce me to their acquaintance, a proposal to which—after having taken the advice and secured the permission of the keepers—I was glad to accede.

I was, accordingly, ushered into an enclosure in the garden of the Asylum, where, it appeared, such harmless persons as worthy John were permitted to breathe the air, and converse on such subjects as suited the tender state of their intellects.

As I entered this place, of which the gate was immediately locked behind me by a keeper who attended for the purpose, I perceived there were within it a dozen or more men, some of whom sat on benches under the trees, while others strolled to and fro along the gravelled walks. The noise of our entrance, and the appearance of honest John, with whom all seemed to be perfectly well acquainted, drew them about us; and they were soon introduced to me by name—one being the Honourable Timoleon

Smash, an ex-congressman, from Virginia ; another, a gentleman of the press, of which, he himself informed me, he had been once a bright and shining light ; and others of other respectable ranks and professions.

My friend John Jones having introduced me, the ex-editor, Mr. Ticklum, for that was his name, removing a pair of spectacles from his nose, and crumpling into his pocket an old newspaper which he had been reading, begged to know if I was ‘a fellow in misfortune ;’ a question I felt some little embarrassment in replying to ; when my friend John removed the difficulty by declaring, “ I was, as he could bear witness, unfortunate like themselves, in being in my senses among a world of madmen ; but had not yet been found out by the world, and so had escaped being made a prisoner ; that I was a philanthropic personage and philosopher, who sympathised with them in their sorrows, and came to learn of them those proofs of the folly and injustice of the world which all were so well able to speak to.”

“ I can require,” said I, “ no better proof of this than has been furnished in the history of my friend Mr. Jones ; whose sufferings, considered as a punishment inflicted upon him on account of his philanthropy, I esteem as extraordinary as they are unjust. Truly it seems to me not merely surprising, but incredible, that men should punish a fellow creature for practising a virtue they so universally commend.”

“ Surprising !” said Mr. Ticklum, with a stare of melancholy astonishment, while all the rest looked at me with pity and a groan ; “ why, sir, that’s their way ; and you must be younger than you seem, and less experienced than we should have supposed, sir, from your sensible appearance, if you are surprised at the inconsistency. Virtue, sir, is a thing man loves best in the abstract ; the practice of it interferes with too many of his interests to allow him to be friendly to its professor. Really, sir, we are afraid you do not understand the world ; you have not yet been *wronged* into knowledge. The virtues best rewarded in the world are its

vices : avarice and ambition, impudence and deceit, truckling and time-serving, will win favour, fortune, and distinction, when generosity and modesty, integrity and independence, are repaid with neglect, contempt, imposition—nay, with vindictive hate. It is a truth, sir, that can't be denied, that—as the world now wags—a man can practise no virtue safely : he may write about it, he may talk about it, and gain credit thereby ; but the acting of it will assuredly bring him into trouble. There is not a person here present who cannot furnish you good proof of this. Know, sir, that all of us around you are examples of the world's injustice—the martyrs of principle, the victims of our several virtues. We were too good for the world, sir, and therefore the world has clapped us into a madhouse. Sir, you would scarce suppose it of 'an editor, but we—even we, Daniel Ticklum, as we stand here—are a living monument of the world's injustice. In us you behold a victim of our virtue !”

With that, Mr. Ticklum wiped his eyes ;

and all the rest groaned, except the Hon. Mr. Smash—a very stately young personage, with a sad and oratorical voice—who, stepping forward, said,—“What my friend Ticklum says is perfectly true. Man, a hypocrite even to himself, and inconsistent alike in good and evil, sets a bounty of praise on virtue, which he fancies he desires, only to break the bones of those who bring it to him! The world has prated a long time of the excellency of *patriotism*—a virtue which not lying historians only, but the universal voice of society, would seem to place among the highest, purest, most honour-deserving of all virtues. How much the world really likes patriotism may be seen in my history; which, while my friend Ticklum recovers his composure, I shall be happy to relate for your edification.”

I expressed myself extremely desirous to hear this curious relation, and Mr. Smash immediately began his history in the following terms.

CHAPTER II.**THE PATRIOT'S STORY.**

“As I design relating only my political history,” said Mr. Smash, “I shall say nothing of my parentage, birth, or youth, except that the first was highly respectable, as you may perceive by the name, (I am of the Smashes, sir, of Virginia,) that my birth happened in one of the most patriotic counties of the Ancient Dominion, and that my youth was, as I may say, one long dream of public virtue. I longed to serve my country, and approve myself the worthiest of her sons—a passion that grew with my growth, until, in early manhood, it had banished every other from my bosom. The love of pelf and of pleasure, nay, even the love

of woman, I threw aside and forgot, feeding my appetites upon aspirations after renown, and wedding my heart to the glories of my native land. Happy, thought I, is he who can serve his country, enjoying, in life, the *digito monstrari* of a nation's approbation, in death, the *dulce et decorum* of a nation's gratitude, carved in immortal letters on his tomb.

“The great object of my wishes was, at last, effected—I stumped through my district, and my fellow-citizens sent me to Congress! —

“Judge the delight with which I first trod that glorious hall, thronged with the representatives of a free people, each looking a Cato or Aristides, and munching his tobacco with the air of a ruler of the world. I threw myself upon my chair, mounted my legs upon my desk, took my quid of best James-River, and enjoyed for a while the rapture and dignity of my new situation. But this indulgence did not last long: I remembered I was there to serve my country—to perform the great duties of a representative—which service and duties I re-

solved to enter upon without further loss of time. I began my patriotic labours forthwith.

“The first thing I did was to make a speech; and, as the quantity and quality of public spirit in the breast of a legislator can only be shown by the length of his harangue, I made my maiden effort as long as the state of my health (which was weak from hard work on the stump and at barbecues during the canvass) permitted. Having once got the floor—which was no easy matter, there being two or three hundred members who were as ripe for proving their patriotism as I,—I launched into a discourse, in which I handled things both in general and particular, and gave the whole history of Greece and Rome. As to the subject then before the house, I do not remember what it was—or rather I never knew it; nor, indeed, was that a matter of any consequence, the last week of the session being the proper time to speak to the point. I spoke for seven days, and then concluded, my strength giving way sooner than I expected. My speech was, never-

theless, of very good length, and, I believe, my constituents were satisfied. Indeed, upon consideration, I think they had reason to be ; for my oration furnished matter (excluding all other, saving a few editorial scraps now and then) to the Watch-Tower of Freedom, the weekly paper of my district, week after week, during the whole winter ; in fact, the printing of it occupied the Watch-Tower of Freedom longer than I the hall of Liberty ; and, for aught I can tell, they may not have finished it yet.

“ This speech made a great sensation. The thrilling eloquence, by which it was said to be characterised, the fiery fervour, the scorching sarcasm, the annihilating invective, the bursts of sublimity and pathos, the keen wit, the elegant humour, the classic style, the poetic adornment, added to the graceful gesture, the magnificent voice, the eye of fire, and other congressional qualities which it enabled me to develope, took the house by storm ; and I was at once pronounced a legislator of the first

grade—a master and ruling spirit—a sun-born son of genius—a giant of intellect—a Titan of oratory—in short, sir, a great man. Compliments and congratulations fell upon me like the leaves of November; the Speaker shook me by the hand, the President invited me to supper, and members of all parties sought my acquaintance. In a word, I was raised to the pinnacle of favour, and admitted to be one of the first men in Congress.

“ Having made my speech, I felt that I had accomplished one of the great objects for which I had been sent to the legislature. And thus, a chief duty being performed, and my mind released from the load of responsibility that oppresses the unspoken member, I was able to direct my energies to other objects yet to be accomplished, and to reflect what course it became me to take, as a man of principle and true American patriotism, in relation to my future career.

“ And now I felt, even more strongly than before, how deep and fervid was the flame with

which I burned to do my country service ; and during the two weeks which I lay on my back, recovering from the toil of my oration, I devoted every moment to the consideration of the evils under which the country was labouring, and the means of removing them. In a word, I devised and digested a plan of reform, which I resolved to bring before Congress as soon as possible ; and that my constituents might perceive I was entering upon the work in earnest, and without any partial views or inclinations, I determined to begin at home—that is, in Congress itself—and so attack abuses at the fountain-head.

“ Observing that two or three different members, while I lay sick, had occupied the house with uncommonly long speeches, I began to reflect what would be the consequence, were all to claim the privilege of speaking seven days on a stretch, as I had done myself. I was shocked to discover, that if only two hundred should insist upon speaking that length of time, and only *once* each, it would require a session of

three years and ten months to enable them to get through, without counting the time required for business.

“Struck with this discovery, I immediately brought a proposition before the house to amend its regulations so far as to secure attention to the proper business of the nation. The bill which I desired to introduce, provided that no member should be allowed, under any circumstances, (except while making his maiden speech,) to speak longer upon any business before the house than half an hour at a time.

“The reader who does not trouble himself about journals of Congress, and who skips the reports of debates in his newspaper, will be surprised to hear that this motion, which I considered the most patriotic I could make, since it deprived me of the right of delivering ten other speeches, which I at first meditated, was met by angry remonstrance and the fiercest opposition. Two hundred honourable members started upon their feet, and charged me with an attack upon their privileges, a design to

subvert the liberty of speech. ‘What did they come there for?’ they asked: ‘to maintain the rights of their constituents, and defend their own.’ ‘Was *that*,’ they cried, ‘the temple of Liberty, the hall of Freedom, and were members to be gagged at the very altar? If the honourable member brought padlocks for their lips, why not fetters for their limbs, whips for their backs, daggers for their throats? They could tell *me*, and they could tell Mr. Speaker—they could tell the world, which surveyed their proceedings—that the representatives of American freemen were themselves freemen, who would resist the approaches of the enemy of liberty to the last, and die in the breach, or, as some of them said, ‘in the ditch,’ (which is no proper place for a gentleman’s deathbed,) under the ruins of the constitution.’

“In short, there was a deal of eloquent speeches made, and a torrent of indignation poured upon my proposition, and on me. It was in vain that I called the attention of members to the discovery I had made, the sur-

prising fact, that if we should all speak as long as we could, and attend to business besides, the session must be necessarily prolonged through a term of four years; which was just twice as long as we had a right to sit, and in direct contravention of the obligation imposed on Congress to hold four different sessions within that period. I was answered, 'the right of speech was sacred, and should not be invaded.' I appealed to their good sense, and the Speaker called me to order; I addressed myself to their reason, and a member asked me 'if I meant to insult the house?' while another—a man whom I before was disposed to regard as of quite a patriotic turn, though born so far north as Pennsylvania—told me, 'if I had come to that house with reason in my pocket, I had brought my wares to the wrong market.'

"In truth, my proposition was a bomb-shell (I use the Congressional figure, as striking for its expressiveness as it is venerable for its age) cast upon the floor at the feet of members. It produced a commotion even in the galleries;

the reporters, its only friends, received it with frenzies of approbation, so that the Sergeant-at-Arms was ordered to expel them : and this is the reason why there has never been a full and satisfactory report of that debate in the newspapers.

“ The motion was lost by a tremendous majority, no one voting in its favour except myself and a member from Down East, who was tongue-tied, and therefore hated long speeches. It caused the members pretty generally to regard me with coolness and ill-will ; and, what afflicted me greatly, the Southern members seemed to be the most displeased of all. Nevertheless, I had taken my stand, and opposition only determined me the more strongly to devote myself to the cause of my country. I said to myself, ‘ If I fail in my efforts, if I sacrifice myself on the altar of the republic, I shall be remembered as the friend of freedom, and placed among the brightest of its martyrs.’ I determined to persevere in the path pointed out by reason and patriotism together ; and I

resolved, in order to be virtuous on the largest scale, to tear all sectional feelings from my bosom, to forget that Virginia lay on one side of Mason and Dixon's line and Massachusetts on the other, and remember only, as Washington had done before me, that I was an American.

“ My second proposition, being rather of a theoretic than practical complexion, prospective and contingent, at least, as to its effects on the national purse, but immediate, certain, and highly advantageous as to its effects on the national character, I was of opinion would be received with favour and applause by all. It was a measure designed to remove from our government a stain charged to attach to all republics, and which, there was good reason to suppose, had a very palpable existence on the fair face of our own. I desired to introduce a bill in which it was resolved, preambulatorily, (though there is no such word in Walker,) ‘ that the nation was, of right ought to be, and through time would be, grateful to all its citi-

zens who contributed to its glory and weal,' and provided, sectionally, (which is as new a word as the other,) ' that its gratitude should be extended not only to those who lost legs and arms in its service, but to all who, by valuable discoveries and improvements in art and science, by the foundation of philanthropic institutions, the dissemination of moral principles, and the production of works of genius, might be pronounced the benefactors of their country.' On such worthies of the republic I proposed we should bestow pensions, or grants of land, together with such honours as it consisted with the character of our institutions to allow; and I advised, moreover, that we should begin the work of gratitude by erecting, without a moment's delay, the divers tombs and monuments which Congress had long since voted to deceased heroes of the Revolution, without voting appropriations to build them.

“ This proposition, I am grieved to say, produced a hubbub full as great as the other, and caused a still more violent outcry against my-

self. ‘What!’ cried an honourable member from the neighbourhood of the Rocky Mountains, ‘waste the people’s money! my constituents’ money? Mr. Speaker, if that ar’n’t flat treason, I don’t know what ar’. I say, if there ar’ to be any pensions for improvements, rat all the arts and sciences, and call ’em improvements *on land*, and I stick in a claim for my constituents. But I go ag’in the whole measure. I reckon the honourable feller—that is, the honourable gentleman from Virginnee—thinks money grows among us, out in the West, like deer-skins and dirt; but it don’t.’ ‘Extravagance! wilful, criminal, shocking, extravagance!’ cried others by hundreds. The idea of wasting the people’s money seemed to strike all with horror; some were petrified, many aghast; and one member, rising up, was so overcome with dismay that he could not speak a word; but looking at the Speaker, and then at me, and then at the Speaker again, he tapped his finger against his forehead three times, and then sat down. What he meant, if he meant anything,

I did not then know ; but I have since had an idea, he thought I had lost my senses. I endeavoured to satisfy the honourable members that a few thousand dollars taken annually from an exchequer rolling over with a surplus of twenty or thirty millions a year, would not affect the credit of the government, nor reduce a single citizen to bankruptcy ; that the American people were not, as *they* seemed to think them, a nation of heartless niggards and misers ; that we, the representatives of the only truly popular government in the world, owed it to mankind and ourselves, to the interests of our country and the institutions we affected to prize, to show our fellow-creatures we knew how to appreciate and reward the merit of our citizens, and to reward them at least as wisely and generously as kings and princes were wont to reward their deserving subjects. I say, I endeavoured to satisfy honourable members on these points, and others that occurred to me ; but I endeavoured in vain. Honourable members insisted that the people's money was

sacred—that their constituents *were* misers and niggards—and that it was our duty, as far as the world and mankind were concerned, to let them take care of themselves, we, the representatives of the United States, taking care of their money. Nay, and one fellow (as I am not now in Congress, I am not obliged to call him ‘gentleman,’) got up and insinuated, ‘that, as every body could see I was a *patriot*, I was getting up the measure with a view to my own future benefit.’

“As a Virginian and a gentleman, I could not stand so gross an insult; I therefore pronounced the man a scoundrel, and called the Speaker to bear witness I should blow his brains out, the moment the house adjourned. As it began to be a serious matter, the Speaker called us to order; the insulter thereupon assured the house he meant nothing personal in the remark; and I, in consequence, acknowledging the same in relation to my threat, the matter blew over without a fight; which was agreeable to me, having my hands so full of

the nation's business. The quarrel was settled ; and so was my patriotic proposition. There were but ten men sufficiently alive to the honour and interests of their country to vote for it. No one, indeed, objected to the preamble, namely, that the nation was, ought to be, and would be, grateful to all its good citizens that deserved gratitude ; and that part of the bill passed *nem. con.* ; but the paying sections, which were the gist of the affair, went by the board. And so it was resolved that the republic of America should be as ungrateful as those of Greece and Rome of yore, and ten times more so.

“ My next attempt to arouse my colleagues to a sense of their duty was equally unfortunate. Perceiving that our vast frontiers, both inland and maritime, east, west, north, and south, lay as open and unprotected as the common-lands of a village, so that it would be easy, at any moment, for a curious person, or persons, of covetous propensities, to steal into the land, and help themselves to a few towns

and cities, together with as many of the militia as they could catch, I thought it my duty to bring the matter before Congress; and I introduced it accordingly, accompanied by a bill which I asked to have referred to a special committee. By this bill it was provided, that the standing army of the United States should ~~be increased~~ so far as to allow to each fortress on the frontier a garrison, to consist of one private and one non-commissioned officer, both well armed.

“ The reading of this bill was like throwing *two* bomb-shells among the members. Convulsions of horror and wrath seized instantly upon all. ‘ Increase the standing army !’ they cried ; ‘ put our liberties in the keeping of an armed soldiery ! A conspiracy, rank conspiracy ! a conspiracy against our freedom !’

“ In short, there never was such an uproar in the house before or since ; and I was myself almost frightened at the terror I had created. Nothing was seen in my proposal but a design, as audacious in conception as it must prove dia-

bolical in effect, to reduce the nation to bondage, to batter down the capitol with artillery, and bring the bayonets of the myrmidons of power against the throats of honourable members where they stood. But the terror of honourable members was equalled by their heroism ; and again, as in a previous instance, they declared, that, come the usurper and despot when he would, as for *them*, let others do as they might, they would oppose him face to face, foot to foot, hand to hand, perish in their chains, like the Roman senators under the swords of the savage Brennus, fall with decent dignity like Julius Cæsar, or, snatching up arms, strike a last blow for freedom, and die—as before—‘ in a ditch.’

“ There never was such an uproar, as I said before ; and every word I pronounced, in the effort to allay it, only made matters worse. An honourable member boasting that our frontiers required no guards beyond ‘ our gallant and glorious militia,’ I had the effrontery (as it was called) to tell him that, with all my respect for the militia, I thought they were a very uncer-

tain set of personages; at which insult to the yeomanry of America, he, the aforesaid member, fell into a fit, and was carried off in a dangerous condition to his lodgings. Nay, this expression of mine leading to a debate, in which, as is usual on such occasions, remarks were made on all such subjects connected and unconnected with the question before the house, I had the misfortune to give offence by two other declarations, which a sense of honesty called on me to make; namely, first, that the Hartford conventionists were not all traitors; and, secondly, (but this I offered rather as an opinion than a positive declaration,) that foreigners of six months' residence in the country were not citizens. The first assertion, though it caused faint murmurs of approbation from some Yankee members, was met by others with scornful cries of 'Eccentricity !' and the Speaker decided that it was out of order. The second produced a furious and universal explosion, and a hundred voices, at least, charged me with a design to revive those accursed inventions of tyranny and

the devil, the Alien and Sedition laws. In fine, my bill went to the tomb of the Capulets ; and it was the general opinion I would soon follow it.

“ That evening I was waited upon by the delegation of the state I represented, who, after reproaching me, in a formal manner, for deserting (so they called it) the principles of the South, assumed a more friendly tone, and remonstrated affectionately against the novel and dangerous course I was taking, assuring me ‘ there was no use in being so honest.’ They declared I had entered Congress with the finest prospects in the world, but that I was defeating them.

“ ‘ Gentlemen,’ said I, with dignity, ‘ I came here, not to exalt myself, but to serve my country.’

“ ‘ You did !’ said they, and they all looked astonished. ‘ Your *constituents*, you mean, my dear Mr. Smash,’ said the eldest of the party, giving me a serious look.

“ ‘ Sir,’ said I, ‘ my constituents are my

country, my state, and the good people of my district ; to all of whom I owe allegiance, but to the first in the highest degree. When I can serve the people of my district, without striking at the interests of the state, I will do so ; when I can serve the commonwealth, without infringing the interests of the nation, the commonwealth shall be served ; when I can serve my country, I must do so, and without asking whether the interests of my state or district suffer or not.'

“ ‘ Heavens and earth !’ cried the delegation, ‘ this is flat federalism !’

“ ‘ No, gentlemen,’ said I, ‘ it is patriotism.’

“ ‘ Federalism ! consolidation ! aristocratical ! monarchical ! anti-republican !’

“ My gentlemen fell into a rage, but were called to order by the Nestor of the delegation, who took them aside, and having counselled with them awhile, returned, and grasping my hand, said, with a friendly and sympathetic countenance, while the others sat nodding their heads ominously at one another, and looking on

with a doleful stare,—‘ You are a young man, Mr. Smash, quite a young man—a very promising talented man, Mr. Smash ; but young— young and inexperienced, Mr. Smash. May rise to the first honours in the land, Mr. Smash, if only a little cautious and prudent—a little prudent, Mr. Smash. Take my advice, Mr. Smash: your health is infirm, you have a nervous temperament, a great deal of enthusiasm, Mr. Smash ; you allow yourself to be excited, and then, you know, a man says strange things, and *does* strange things, Mr. Smash. Now take my advice ; keep your mind tranquil, Mr. Smash ; stay at home a few days, and live low—very low, Mr. Smash ; avoid all speaking, don’t engage in debate for a whole month—not for a whole month, Mr. Smash : *do* take care of yourself, or you don’t know what may happen, Mr. Smash. The brain, Mr. Smash, the brain is a very tender and delicate’ organ—a very, *very* tender organ, Mr. Smash.’

“ I smiled at the old gentleman’s fears, assured him I found myself in uncommon health,

and the delegation left me. I saw they were displeased at the freedom and boldness of my course; but, as my conscience and common sense told me I was right, I resolved to persevere, and serve my country, whether Congress would or not. I perceived in them a strong example of the effect of sectional and party feeling in warping the minds of honourable men from the path of duty; and I resolved the more firmly that my spirit should hold fast to its integrity.

CHAPTER III.

THE PATRIOT'S STORY CONTINUED.

“ THE next day a measure was brought before Congress, the success of which was universally allowed to be of vital importance to the nation ; but, as it was proposed and supported by administration members, the party in opposition felt themselves called upon to oppose it with all their strength. I should have told the reader that the freemen of my district were anti-administration almost to a man, and that I was therefore of the opposition party. I resolved to prove my independence and patriotism, by voting for this measure, which reason and com-

mon sense told me should be supported ; and I did so.

“ Horrible was the effect. My old associates, ridiculing what they called my unparalleled apostasy, reviled me, as far as the Speaker would permit, as a renegade from the party ; while the newspapers, (that is, on our side,) which had hitherto treated me with uncommon courtesy, now burst out into a frenzy of rage and vituperation, some calling me Judas Iscariot, others Benedict Arnold, and all agreeing I was a monster of perfidy and baseness, a traitor to my principles, the murderer of my country. Some spoke of tar and feathers, while others hinted there were daggers in the hands of free-men to reward the betrayer of their rights. Vials, or rather demijohns, of wrath were poured on my head, and tempests of scorn and vilification were let loose about my ears. In a word, had I descended into Pandemonium itself, which many wise persons think lies no lower than a few feet below the foundations of the capitol, I could not have found myself beset by a more fire-fingered,

venom-tongued, unrelenting set of persecutors than a single act of patriotism now brought against me. I was not merely an apostate and assassin—I was a fool and madman. The very papers which, a month before, had lauded to the skies my extraordinary genius, my incomparable eloquence, now discovered that I possessed not a single talent—that I was a tiresome, bombastic, contemptible speaker, with no merit beyond the long wind and loquacity of an old woman—in short, that I was a booby, and the greatest one in Congress.

“It is true, what I lost on one side I gained on the other. The administration prints, which had been, at first, rather blind to my merits, now burst into fervid panegyrics, eulogising my genius, my intrepidity, my integrity, my patriotic union with the friends of the nation ; and the President’s chief cook, coming to me by night in his best coat, offered me my choice betwixt a land office in the west, an Indian agency, or a ministry to Jerusalem.

“Who would think that my proud and pa-

triotic rejection of a share in the spoils of office, offered by a grateful executive, should have only exposed me, when known, as it speedily was, to fresh attacks of indignation? Honourable members were incensed that I should presume to greater disinterestedness than themselves—that I should profess a code of morals superior to that which experience and custom had shown to be most convenient for a congressman. They abused my ‘affected honesty,’ for so they called it; they laughed at my ‘romantic honour,’ my ‘political sentimentality ;’ while some, still more uncharitable, heaped sarcasm on the wisdom that had prevented my accepting ‘a reward which I knew, the superior branch of Congress would not have sanctioned.’—Alas for the man, who, in this enlightened age, in this unsophisticated country, has the audacity to play the patriot!

“My next effort had the good effect to restore me to the favour of the party ; but it lost me the friendship of the chief cook. In the honesty of my heart, and under the persuasion

that the measure I then proposed would meet the approbation of all, I introduced a bill providing for the dismissal from the public service of all office-holders who meddled in elections, or played the demagogue at political meetings or in newspapers. For this the opposition pretty generally voted; but it was treated with the greatest contumely by the friends of power, and strangled without ceremony. They charged me indignantly with my desertion of *their* party, though, Heaven knows, I had never joined it—with my fickleness of mind, my natural perfidy of spirit, &c. &c.; and concluded by execrating the audacity of my attack on the rights of citizens; whereas, on the contrary, my sole intention, as I declare on my conscience, was to *defend* the rights of citizens. The papers on that side of the question took up the cudgels, and, as it was generally admitted they knew how to use them, I received such a basting for my tergiversation, wrong-headedness, black-heartedness, &c., as broke all the bones of my spirit—though, happily, not my

spirit itself. The wrath on that side of the question extended even to my friend the chief cook, who clapped into the governmental journal an article written by his own hand, in which it was insinuated I had taken a bribe from the Emperor of the Turks, who was at that time suspected to be in the country, buying patriots at the highest prices ; though what his sublime highness wanted ~~with them was never~~ discovered.

“ My next act destroyed all the good effect, as far as I was personally concerned, wrought by the preceding : and, indeed, I was from this moment a falling man, a sinking patriot, a martyr to my principles and my love of country. As Aristides fell, so fell I, detested for my *justness*. Timolean and the elder Brutus sacrificed the blood of their own families to the interests of their countries ; and their countries voted them a brace of unnatural murderers and numskulls, as it is probable they were. My own fate was somewhat similar ; I sinned with the same disinterestedness, and was rewarded with equal gratitude.

“ My sins—for so they were accounted, though posterity I hope will judge otherwise—I intend recording in as few words as possible, that I may get the sooner to their reward. I voted for a *northern measure*, and thought it was patriotic to do so. But from that moment my friends of the south considered me a madman, and my constituents began to take the alarm. This was committing the seven deadly sins all at once, and forgiveness was impossible. I then, in a harangue which I made on the subject of patriotism, to enlighten the honourable members, who, I perceived, did not know what patriotism was, succeeded in inflaming the rage of both parties, by assuring them (which was a thing I thought they all firmly believed) that America had never produced more than *one* Washington, and that he was not born in Virginia, but in America. I say, I offended both parties; for the friends of power, it seems, insisted that their chief was a second Washington; and my fellow Virginians considered, and indeed pronounced it ‘impiety’ itself, to admit that

George Washington was anything less than a Virginian.

“My next sin of patriotism was a declaration, which I made only after deep reflection, viz. that the right of nullifying the laws enacted in that Congress existed in no individual or body of individuals in the United States, saving only in the Supreme Court thereof; which opinion was immediately pronounced ‘blasphemy,’ amid groans and shrieks of indignation.

“I then, being somewhat tired of the eternal croaking honourable members made against the aristocracy—that is, the foolish ladies and gentlemen of the land—as being the foes of democracy and liberty, ventured to express a belief, founded on the house-burnings, riots, lynchings, &c., at that time somewhat prevalent in the democratic circle, that liberty was in less danger from the aristocracy, or foolish ladies and gentlemen as aforesaid, than from the democracy itself; which declaration was unanimously pronounced ‘the most astonishing sample of Atheism to which that house had ever been compelled

to listen; and indeed it produced such a thrill of horror in the assembly that one gentleman fell into fits, and was carried to his lodgings in an extremely dangerous condition.

“My next—my last and greatest—sin grew directly out of that declaration; for honourable members starting up in fury, and bidding me ‘know ~~that the~~ democracy of my district, the honest and confiding constituents whom I had betrayed, would exact of me a severe penalty for my misdeeds; that they had already called a public meeting in the district to express their indignation at the course I had pursued, and would in a short time send me instructions to change it, or resign my seat in that house:—I say, these innuendos and menaces being sternly flung in my teeth, I rose and called the house to witness, ‘that I held myself to be a rational being, the servant and factor of my constituents, sent to that house to legislate for their benefit and that of the nation; and not the tool of their caprices, to pander away honesty, honour, and common sense to their whims and passions—

and, in a word, that I utterly denied their right to instruct me to any act opposed to the dictates of my own reason.

“ ‘ Treason and madness ! ’ cried every soul in the house, save one, whom the awfulness of my heresy had shocked into an apoplexy, and who was afterwards, when the house adjourned, found sitting at his desk stone-dead ; ‘ treason and madness ! madness and treason ! treason and madness ! ’ And so they went on exclaiming against me, until the house adjourned.

“ There was more meaning in these expressions than I had at any time suspected. A storm was brooding over me, of which I did not dream, until that last patriotic confession (for surely the resolution that gave it utterance came not more from personal independence than a love of country) caused it suddenly to burst in thunder over my head. As I passed from the house, I was suddenly seized upon by six strong men, (the members of the house, with at least twenty senators, who were present, looking coolly on, and refusing me help,) clapped into

a carriage, driven rapidly away, and in due course of time deposited—ay, by the faith of an honest man and congressman!—in the mad-house in which you find me.

“Such was the reward of public virtue! I was, I believe, the first martyr to liberty ever served in that way in America; but it has been, I believe, ever since, a standing rule in Congress to vote any member a madman who betrays the slightest symptoms of patriotism.

“In this Asylum, and particularly in the solitude of the dungeon to which I was first consigned, I have had leisure to review my congressional career, and ponder on the truths with which it has made me acquainted. I perceive that the days for Timoleons and Washingtons have gone by, and that the world, however much it may stand in need of their services, is determined to do without them. The cruel reception my patriotism had met from my brother legislators, I had good reason to know, was sanctioned by the people at large, who, in these days, actually seem to

entertain the most cordial hatred of all public men who will not condescend to cheat them. That my fellow-labourers in the legislature should array themselves against me was not, perhaps, very surprising or inexplicable; but it was a grievous wound to my spirit to find the people for whom I laboured, siding, as (if I am to judge from the public prints) they all did against me. Before I left my dungeon, I discovered, in a fragment of newspaper which was accidentally left in the room, an account of my constituents having burned me in effigy in various places throughout the district; with some remarks of the editor highly approbatory of that just expression of popular indignation. The people (I mean all the 'ocracies together) were therefore as unwilling to be served by, as their delegates were to serve with, patriots. They required, not men of integrity and talent—upright and experienced sages—to watch over the interests of the nation; but truckling parasites, the slaves of their sovereign passions, the tools of their imperial whims, to 'play their

hands,' (as the blacklegs have it,) in the gambling contest of interest against interest, section against section, party against party, which they have chosen to dignify with the title of legislation.

"I have now learned to understand the meaning of the saying often droned into the minds of youth, without being always appreciated—that virtue is its own reward. Well, indeed, should it be its own reward, since, commonly, it has no other."

With these words, and a heavy sigh, the patriot finished his story.

"A very hard case," said the editor, scratching his head. "It was a very foolish thing of you to be so patriotic; but we can't blame you: men *do* say very fine things of patriotism—indeed we believe we have said them ourselves; so that it is not surprising a young man should be sometimes misled. However, we have been just as foolish, and, like you, a martyr to principle. Patriotism—as a sentiment, or poetic fiction, or historical remem-

brance—is dear to the imaginations of all men, and its praises are ever on their lips ; but if we consult the records of nations, we shall find that patriots, in general, have had but a scurvy time of it. It is the same with other virtues, as I said before : they are the apples of Sodom, that men admire as long as they merely look at them, but loathe and cast from them the moment they have tasted. Yes,” continued Mr. Ticklum, turning again to me—“ *we* also are the victim of our virtue !”

With that, he wiped his eyes a second time, and I, sympathising in his grief, and being curious to know what that virtue was, which a journalist could practise consistently with his editorial duties, and how it had reduced him to his present condition, begged he would do me the favour to relate his history.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EDITOR'S STORY.

“SIR,” said Mr. Ticklum, “we were editor and proprietor of the Light of the People—more commonly and familiarly called the People’s Light—a paper, sir, extremely well known, and when it came into our hands, and, indeed, as we may justly say, for some years after, of the highest repute in the world of letters. Sir, it was a vigorous paper, and it had seven thousand subscribers; more than one half of whom were good pay. It was a rich paper, therefore, as well as a good one, and we were making our fortune by it.

“Sir—when we became the editor of the

People's Light, we were acknowledged to be the ablest hand that had ever conducted it; and we *were*, sir—we scorn all affected modesty; as an editor, sir, we have a right to praise ourself. Besides our natural abilities, sir, we enjoyed the advantage of an extensive acquaintance with the public tastes. Our predecessor was an experienced man, and our friend; and when we bought him out, he gave us a deal of instruction on the true principles of nasiduction."

"*Nasiduction*?" said I, interrupting the gentleman; "what is that?"

"Sir," said Mr. Ticklum, "it is a word used among editors, to express their art, that being otherwise without a name. It means, sir, to lead by the nose—or nose-leading; and is thus expressive of the object of the art editorial, which is to manage the public.

"Our predecessor gave us the results of his experience on the subject of nasiduction; and, thus accomplished, we entered upon the duties of the People's Light with the skill, the

power, and the success of a veteran. We became a shining light in the party—that is, the party we belonged to—and were soon esteemed its chief organ. As a politician, we flatter ourselves our abilities were undeniable; and in the other spheres of editorial avocation we were not found wanting. Our talent for invective was universally acknowledged; we abused our opponents with a zeal that gained us the love and respect of every member of our faction. If a reputation was to be blasted, a spirit wounded to the quick, a doubtful friend to be held up to contempt, or an incautious enemy to execration, who was so ready, who so able, to wield the lash of punishment? Nay, if the party itself was to be humbugged, if the interests of the leaders, our great patrons, required a little dust to be thrown in the eyes of our readers, who could effect the purpose with equal address? Sir, we knew how to inflame the rage, and disturb the fears of our subscribers; we knew how to awaken their self-love, their vanity, their pride, and thus lead them to

deeds of glory. In short, sir, we were a first-rate editor, a man of reputation, sir, a man of power, a man of money—we were making our fortune, and—no thanks to virtue—with none of her assistance. We were a happy man, sir: we sat under our own vine and fig-tree, we warmed ourself at our own fire, we rode our own horse, we fattened on our own chickens, and we endured the scolding of our wife, and the squalling of our children, with equanimity, for we endured them in our own house. As we said before, we were making our fortune: we had a thousand friends to help us to spend it.

“Behold how virtue—sir, we say *virtue*, for virtue it was—crept betwixt us and the sunshine of prosperity; hacked to pieces our vine and fig-tree, put out our fire, spavined our horse, killed our chickens, and brought the sheriff’s surliest deputy into our best parlour.

“We had the misfortune, one night, to dream that the devil came to our bedside, bidding us get up and follow him. This we did, (that is, we dreamed we did,) for we saw he was a per-

son not to be trifled with ; but we must confess, sir, it was with fear and trembling. We ventured, however, as he led us into the street, to ask whither he was carrying us. ‘ To your appointed place,’ said he, looking as black as midnight, but wagging his tail, as if pleased with our company. Then taking us by the hand, he made a spring into the air at least ten feet high, and flinging up his legs, and ours too, as we reached that height, he made a dive headlong into the pavement, which, instead of dashing out our brains, as we expected, yielded to the shock, and away we went through flagstones and gravel, gas pipes and culverts, the solid earth and still more solid rock, until we gained his infernal dominions about two miles below. Here, sir, we saw sights that made our hair stand on end ; and it is our purpose, on some future occasion, to commit an account of them to the press : but at present we shall speak of them briefly, and of such only as are illustrative of our own story.

“ Pray, sir,” said the Honourable Mr. Smash,

here interrupting the story, "allow me to ask if you can't speak of them in the first person singular? I don't wish to be critical or impertinent; but, really, after what I have suffered from the press, I assure you I never hear that grand editorial *we*, without feeling as if again undergoing the pangs of castigation; and upon my honour, sir, the fancy is quite uncomfortable."

"Anything to gratify our patrons—that is, I mean, to oblige a friend," said Mr. Ticklum, descending from the style professional to the humbler phrase of individuality. With which proof of his condescension and good nature he resumed his relation, as follows.

"A very strange and dismal-looking place into which I was led by the devil, my conductor, attracted my curiosity; and asking him what place it was, he told me, The Place of Public Spirits. And being pleased with the interest I displayed in his concerns, he proceeded to show me the rarities of his realm, with which I was wonderfully struck. 'This province of my do-

minions, containing my good Public Spirits,' said he, 'is divided into several departments, or hells, very methodically arranged, each containing a peculiar genus of the damned. For example—you are now passing through the Hell of Politicians; consisting of two rooms, the one containing the politic by ambition—or those who went into public life for the noble purpose of rising to distinction and power; the other appropriated to the politic by covetousness—your base dogs who served nations with the view of picking their pockets.'

“ With that, I looked about me in the first room, a great grotto lighted by fires that were stirred up by imps, and saw the ambitious gentry hung up by the heels against the ceiling, like so many bats in a cave, smoking and broiling, and seeming ever on the point of dropping into the fires below; of which there was the more danger, as each had his bundle of peccadilloes tied to his neck, weighing him down, and the little imps of the fire every now and then saluted them with a volley of red-hot

chunks, as if trying to knock them from their holds. In the next chamber, a cavern similar to the first, were the politic by covetousness—fat placemen boiling in caldrons of molten gold and silver, bubbling up and down like so many tormented bullfrogs, with little scullion imps that sat stirring the pots, and occasionally tapping each seething sinner over the head with red-hot pokers.

“ ‘Truly,’ said I, surprised at the sight, ‘I thought politicians were more virtuous people. Have you any of our American patriots here?’ ”

“ ‘Oh,’ said the devil, ‘a plenty of them.’ ”

“ With that, we passed into a third grot, where were a number of souls, some in great sieves, in which they were searced along with pitchforks and cannon-balls at a white heat; others roasting in heaps, for all the world like heaps of ore roasting at a furnace; and some again being mashed under fulling-hammers, that ground them to atoms at every blow; while others were flaming in refining-pots with white

and black flux, that kept them sputtering and flashing in a manner marvellous to behold.

“I asked what kind of public spirits these were that were handled so roughly.

“‘Oh,’ said the devil, ‘they are Reformers and Agitators—honest personages now undergoing a process to reform their own qualities—a matter which, in their eagerness to amend their neighbours, they entirely forgot to attend to in the world above.’

“The next thing that struck me was a multitude of souls, some grovelling along the floors of a dark passage which we walked through, others cowering away in corners as if to hide them from sight, but all, as I could perceive, having their heads strown over with live coals, and vipers fastened on their breasts. I asked my satanic guide, ‘who these unlucky wretches might be.’

“‘What,’ said he, ‘don’t you know them? and some of your own work, too? These are all small game—the tools and victims of the good fellows you have been looking at.’

“Upon which, rapping some dozen or two of them over the shoulders with a stout bamboo he carried, they started up and displayed the countenances of individuals I very well remembered, some of them poor devils that, being in want of public places, had been employed to do the dirty work of the party, by way of deserving them, as well as their own damnation; some, not place-hunters, but sovereign citizens, who, by a little drumming at their fancies and passions, had been induced to do the same thing, under the impression they were playing the parts of good and honest citizens; besides sundry persons of better note, some of them men of promise, ambitious to serve the public, whom, having become obnoxious to, or put themselves in the way of the party, I had helped to bring under the lash of correction, or drive into the shades of obscurity, where there was little fear of our ever being troubled by them again.

“The sight of these latter personages caused me some concern. Until that moment, it had never occurred to me, that calling a man in the

public papers ‘traitor,’ ‘hireling,’ ‘villain,’ and so on, and teaching society to think him so, was doing him any mischief, except a political one; but the embers upon the head, and the worm at the heart, struck me with both dismay and compunction. Nor were these feelings much diminished, when my conductor whipped up sundry other sufferers, who fell foul of me with their tongues, upbraiding me with numerous other sins of which I had never made much account before. Some charged me with having made them the victims of sharpers, by lauding speculations that were designed for no purpose but to gull numskulls. Here was a soul who accused me of cheating him out of his dollars, by recommending to purchasers some swindler’s ware, of which I knew nothing, except that it was good-natured to commend; while a hundred and fifty opened upon me full mouth as their murderer, for having lauded the excellency of a steam-boat, by which they were all blown into eternity.

“But the most grievous part of the spec-

tacle was the multitudes, the very herds of people who laid their deaths at my door, because of the quack medicines they had taken on my recommendation; for though, in an argument with the devil on the subject, I insisted that the notices of nostrums in my paper were puffs written by the proprietors, and printed and paid for as advertisements, and that, therefore, I had no share in commending them; he declared I was entirely mistaken, that the giving publicity to such things was in itself a recommendation, and I was as much chargeable with their effects as if I had accepted an agency from the compounder, and, myself, supplied the public with death, at a dollar a bottle.

“ Having settled this matter, much more to his own liking than mine, Diabolus bade me ‘ never mind such small ware, (meaning the tools and victims,) but come along and see something of greater importance.’ And giving me a jerk, he dragged me onwards, until the passage we trod terminated in a great chamber, the floor of which, sinking down like the sweep-

ing sides of an amphitheatre, ended at last in a great bog or quagmire; while at the top, where we paused, were long ranges of galleries running all around. In these galleries lounged a great variety of devils looking down with interest upon what passed below; while in the quagmire, floundering in it up to the knees, were multitudes of men, great and small, engaged with marvellous earnestness in pelting one another with mud. ‘Upon my word,’ said I, ‘I don’t understand this at all. What kind of public spirits are these? and what place is it?’

“The devil looked amazed. ‘Is it possible,’ said he, ‘you don’t know? that you don’t recognise your friends from their amusement? Zounds, sir, this is the hell of editors!’ Upon my word, I could not help laughing, it all looked so natural. There they were, indeed, my learned and able contemporaries, bedaubing one another with mudballs, with such zeal and energy as if the weal of a universe depended upon their pastime. ‘Thinks I to myself, ‘if

a certain place that I know of is no worse than this, it is not so bad, after all.' 'Don't be too sure of that,' said Old Nick, reading my thoughts; 'it is all fine fun for a while, but no such pleasant life to lead for ever.' And, indeed, as I looked, and observed one gentleman get a ball in the eye, another a pellet on the cheek, a third a whole mountain of mud on his back, I began to grow melancholy at the thought that the Lights of the World should be so unworthily engaged thus wasting their energies on one another. Nor was this feeling but a little increased, when Diabolus took occasion to observe, 'he was fond of editors: with other sinners,' said he, 'I have a deal of trouble, and am obliged, on the average, to appropriate the services of at least one imp among a thousand, for the purpose of tormenting them. Editors, fortunately, know how to torment themselves.—And now, Mr. Daniel Ticklum, of the People's Light,' said he, 'you know your place—descend.'

"With that he seized me by the nape of the

neck, and tossed me into the thick of my contemporaries, who received me with a shower of mud-balls, which, for all of their softness, had such an effect upon my feelings that I considered myself murdered outright, and opened my mouth to cry for quarter, which I received in the shape of a second volley from the whole company. At that moment I awoke, and found it was all a dream.

“ It was a dream, sir; but the more I revolved it in my mind, the more it troubled and perplexed me. At last, however, I became persuaded it was a vision of warning’ sent me by some good angel, (for one would not think the devil so benevolent,) which it became me to improve. I became a new man. Sir, would you believe it? I began to think, that, in accommodating my principles to those of my patrons, in toiling to please the party and my neighbours, at the sacrifice of some truth and more independence, I was doing wrong. I resolved to change my course, and act the part that became a high-minded, conscientious man—I had no

idea of going to the devil for my subscribers. I resolved to turn over a new leaf, and pursue that fearless, honest, independent course, for which so many of my worthy fellow-citizens were calling : for, indeed, it was a common subject of lamentation throughout the land, in my day, that we had so few editors of high, fearless, independent spirit.

“ Sir, when I made that resolution I had seven thousand subscribers : a week after I had put it into execution, I had but two thousand ! My first independent remark was the signal of my ruin. And what was that remark ? Why, sir, a compliment to an enemy, an opposition candidate—an admission that he was an honest and able man, in many respects superior even to our own candidate, and worthy of confidence and honour. A few more truths ended the matter. ‘ Stop my paper ! ’ was echoed in my ears by two thousand voices, and thrown before my eyes in as many epistolary missives. Nay, sir, one half even of the three thousand subscribers who never paid their dues,

fell into the like anger, and bade me ‘stop their papers.’—In short, sir, it was a lost case with me; my subscribers left me, my creditors put their accounts into the hands of lawyers, and my friends, not knowing how else to dispose of me, clapped me into this Asylum.

“ Draw your own moral from my story : it is a true one. As long as I was willing to enslave my spirit, to crush my sense of right and wrong, to forget my principles, to devote the energies of my mind to flatter the whims and passions of my patrons, I enjoyed their favour, and prospered ; the moment I became a man of principle, I lost it.—I say again, that men love virtue best in the abstract. The dignity of independence, the beauty of honour, the excellence of principle, are ever in the mouths of men, nine-tenths of whom will conspire together to ruin the editor who reduces them to practice.

“ But here is my young friend and contemporary, Slasher, a brother of the press, and, like me, a victim of his virtue : he can substantiate everything I say.”

CHAPTER V.

THE STORIES OF THE HONEST CRITIC, THE
DUELLIST, AND THE MAN OF TRUTH.

“My friend Ticklum mistakes,” said Mr. Slasher, a smart young gentleman, who, instead of listening with respect to gather wisdom as it fell from the lips of his senior, whistled fol-de-rol-dol all the time, but now made me a bow and began: “I owe my downfall less to my virtues than to a display of them highly imprudent in my situation. *My* idea of virtue is, that a man likes it well enough, even in practice, so long as it is exercised only at the expense of his neighbours; and this opinion I consider susceptible of proof. Thus, being a

critic, (for, you must know, I was junior editor and sole censor of a literary print,) I had a notion, my readers would be delighted with the honesty that served them up an author, handsomely roasted and well done, every week: for I have long observed that the world has as natural a hankering after author-baitings as after the baitings of bulls and bears. This idea I was confirmed in by finding, that although I, in pursuance of the system I had begun, puffed all and everything brought before me with all my might, our paper, indifferently countenanced at the first, grew poorer in patronage every day; so that the principal conductor at last deserted it entirely, and I was advanced to his vacant chair. I resolved, as my friend Ticklum says, to turn over a new leaf, and strike a sensation, by impaling every scribbler I could lay hands on;—and, that I might at once get a reputation for impartiality, which I thought would be useful, I began the campaign by demolishing a book written by one of my own friends who had often lamented that books were

praised too indiscriminately. The book was an uncommonly bad one, and, as I may say, I did no more than tell the truth of it. But that truth killed me. It was thought so extraordinary, first that a critic should, in these days, treat a book according to its merits, and, secondly, that he should speak the truth of his own friend, that there was no way of accounting for the phenomenon, except by supposing I had had a quarrel with the gentleman; or, in failure of that, that I had suddenly lost my senses. It was proved that the author had never offended me. The inference was therefore inevitable; and *here* I am.

“If you can suppose the impartiality that arose from selfish considerations a virtue, why then, it must be admitted, the world treated me ungenerously. But my own opinion,” added the graceless critic, “is, that it was a proper punishment for my folly. Critics and authors have a common interest, and should hunt in couples, bamboozling mankind together. If you will have a proper confirmation of Tick-

lum's doctrine on the subject of virtue, apply to my friend Lawless there, who can discourse feelingly on the subject."

"He says the truth," said Mr. Lawless, a lugubrious looking person, who now took up the thread of his discourse. "Society flattered me into a virtue, and drove me into a vice, for daring to practise which I was, in both cases, equally punished.

"My story is short and simple. My father was a man of just temper and morals, wise, upright, and religious, and instilled into my mind, from the earliest days, his own lofty principles. He taught me to be patient under wrong, to forgive offence, to forbear revenge; and the world itself told me, that to do so was magnanimity and religion. What my father had inculcated, what society insisted on, I found sanctioned and supported by my own feelings. I, therefore, when my principles were brought to a trial, did what I had no doubt the world expected of me—I held fast to them. I was a man of peace, and sought to pass blameless

through the world. But I could not avoid the contests and bickerings incident to all who mingle with their fellows: I had no protection against the wrath of the bully and the injuries of the ill-tempered.

“It was my misfortune to quarrel with a man, who was emboldened by a knowledge of my peaceful principles, (for I had acted on them, though not under such urgent circumstances, before,) to treat me with the greatest insult, and even violence; and, not content with having thus disgraced me, he even proceeded to the length of challenging me to a duel. My feelings, sir, were as keen, my sense of the outrage as bitter, my sufferings under the shame as great, as any man’s could have been; but I could not shed the blood of the wronger. I thought of the instructions of my father, I thought of the precepts of my religion, I thought of the testimony society had so long and so loudly borne against the duellist, and I refused to take vengeance. This, I had been told before, was magnanimity and true courage:

society now, to my surprise, told me it was cowardice.

“ I do not believe I am, or ever was, a coward—but that is no matter. But grant that it *was* cowardice—what was there in it to require, or authorise, punishment? Does cowardice commit murder? does it steal? does it burn? does it defraud? It is, certainly, not a crime; yet what crime is punished with greater severity? *Contempt* is to man’s spirit what the scourge is to his body; and contempt is the lash with which the world arms itself against the man convicted of the felony of fear. We are brave or timid as God makes us. If courage be a virtue, why not fear? It is an agent, and a powerful one, in repressing evil, and, therefore, given to man for his good. How absurd to punish that to which both religion and law address themselves, to win the human race from crime! At all events, it is only negatively evil, as implying the absence of a quality that man boasts in common with beasts of prey.

“ But it is not my object to refine on this subject. I leave it to philosophers to determine in what degree, and in what way, turpitude is involved in timidity. Granting that I was a craven, (for it is now indifferent to me what imputation may rest on my name,) what right had society to punish me for doing a thing it had so long inculcated as a duty and virtue? I was called a coward, and was deemed so; my friends looked upon me with disdain, my late associates repelled me with scorn. Men sneered openly in my face, and even woman—the very maid who had at first swooned with terror at the thought of my danger in combat—now turned from me as a creature too dishonourable for notice. I was posted, blazoned upon the corners, as a dastard; I was assaulted, too, in the street; and, my adversary being a man of strength greater than my own, I was——. But why should I speak it? As far as a man could be disgraced by the villany of another, I was disgraced; and the world, which should have sympathised and pitied, accepted

the last outrage only as a signal for harsher persecution. I could not defend myself; I sought protection of the law. The very counsellor received me with contempt, told me that, in a case like mine, ‘no *gentleman* need be advised what to do,’ and recommended me, ‘if I designed carrying my complaint before a legal tribunal, to seek the assistance of some pettifogger, whose ideas of honour and duty corresponded with my own.’—I perceived that I could obtain no redress, that I could not even protect myself from future violence, without incurring additional disgrace.

“Conceive my feelings, conceive what was my situation. The respect of my fellows was to me as the breath of life; and I had lost it. I was a ruined man—rejected, despised, derided, trampled on—and all because I had not imbrued my hands in blood—because I had not committed a crime which the finger of Heaven and the hearts of man had pronounced the greatest a mortal could commit. If my forbearance was a virtue, let society take the blame

of blasting it. Deficient in spirit or not, I certainly had not courage to endure universal scorn, to be pointed at as a branded felon. I sought my adversary ;—I fought him—I killed him.

“I was no longer a coward; but I was a murderer! The dastard was forgotten, but the sin of the homicide was inexpiable. The moment my enemy fell, society became wise and moral, and I was exiled from its presence for ever. The latter verdict was just, yet what produced the crime? Ask yourselves what encouragement the world gives to the virtues it so constantly eulogises? I am the victim of worldly inconsistency. Society drove me from my principles, and then punished me for the dereliction.”

With these words, the unfortunate narrator made an end of his story, and immediately after walked away to conceal his agitation, which appeared to be getting the mastery of him. His story touched the tender feelings of Mr. Ticklum, who again applied to his handkerchief,

and declared, with a sob, "the world was mad, and he was sorry he had ever taken the trouble to edit a paper for it." With that, he called upon a fifth gentleman, a very agreeable, honest-looking personage, whom he called Frankman, to relate his experience of the real encouragement given by mankind to the practice of virtue.

"In me," said Mr. Frankman, making me a polite bow, and laying his hand pathetically on his heart—"in me you behold a lover of *truth*. Truth being a virtue which men universally pretend to love, as the foundation of all that is excellent in morals and useful in science, you may suppose that I, who made it the rule and pole-star of my existence, was a special favourite of the world. I assure you, however, on the contrary, that nobody who ever lived in the world endured more constant ill treatment than I.

"My misfortunes commenced in the earliest childhood, and were all attributable to a love of truth instilled into me by my father, who,

while drumming it into my head with one hand, laboured hard to beat it out with the other. Thus, I remember, that for every infantile fib I told, I got a liberal correction, which served to make fibbing hateful to me; and for every truth, the same being commonly a confession of a cat killed, a hen-roost robbed, or some of the neighbours' children hit with a pebble in the eye, I had an abundant birching, which would have made truth-telling just as abhorrent, had not my father been at the pains to assure me he castigated, not my confessions, but my faults, which would have met with punishment twice as emphatic, had I made any attempt to conceal them.

“ In this way, my mind got a bias in favour of truth, which will last me through life. I carried it to school with me, where, had it not already become a part and parcel of my nature, it must have been whipped out of me, the whole school conspiring against me for that purpose. Besides confessing all my own peccadilloes, when called upon to do so by the master, who inva-

riably flogged me for them, I felt a similar impulse to confess those of my schoolmates, who rewarded me in the same way ; and, what with the masters and boys together, I think there was scarce a day, for five years together, Sundays and holidays excepted, that I could not boast at least one sound buffeting, and that, too, not for *my* sins, but the sins of other people. Sir, it is inexpressible how much my schoolmates thumped me ! They all declared they hated liars ; but, it was evident, their affection for truth, if that followed as a corollary, was extremely theoretical. I know they heartily hated me in practice.

“ The love of truth cost me a fortune, as it did the fair Cordelia before me. I had an old aunt, who was somewhat of Lear’s complexion, and being about to make her will, she assembled her two dozen nephews to select a Benjamin, and note him down for the lion’s portion. I was the old lady’s favourite ; she loved my love of truth, as she continually assured me ; and a lie would have sealed me in her heart for ever. ‘ Johnny,

my dear,' said she, giving me a kiss, 'if I should leave you all I am worth in the world, you would be glad when I died, wouldn't you?' 'I would, aunt Sally,' said I: and I told her the truth; for she was rich as a Jew, and I knew the value of money. But the truth did not please the admirer of truth. She turned me out of the house, and left her money to my cousin, Tommy Whapper, who was the greatest bouncer I ever knew.

"The love of truth cost me also a mistress, and, as my fate would have it, a rich one; for, having asked me one day, 'if I did not think her nose was crooked,' (that having been hinted to her by an ill-natured friend,) I told her it was, which was nothing more than truth; but the consequence was, that she utterly discarded, and would never more speak to me.

"In short, sir, the love of truth has caused me more misfortunes than you can well imagine; and were I to relate one tithe of the varied grief it has entailed upon me, I should occupy your attention for a week. It interfered with all my

plans of life ; for my father being too honest a man to have anything to leave me, I was early driven into the world to shift for myself. I made sundry attempts, while yet a lad, to procure employment in a counting-house, considering myself well fitted for the life of a merchant, but was uniformly rejected for giving too honest an account of my qualifications. I was kicked out of the house of a worthy mechanic, who had received me as an apprentice, for telling him a disagreeable fact in relation to my mistress ; and another, who was a member of a church and an enemy of my wronger, having received me into his employ, turned me out neck and heels, of a winter's day, for confessing that he cheated his customers.

“ How I got along in life, carrying such a dead weight as veracity on my shoulders, you may well wonder ; as I now do myself. Yet I have contrived, being of an ingenious turn, and full of speculations, to mount from my original humble station on a tailor's board to avocations of a much more dignified character ; and, as I

may say, I have tried my hand at all the trades and professions, though with no great success in any. I once set up a shop, but ruined myself by telling my customers my goods were not of the best quality ; and I lost an opportunity of making a great fortune, by admitting to a gentleman, who, in a great speculation I proposed, was to provide the means, that his money *might*, perhaps, go to Jerusalem.

“ I picked up a knowledge of engineering, and lost my first rail-road by estimating the cost at the full amount ; which caused my President and Directors to turn me off as an extravagant dog ; while a rival, who reduced the estimate one-half, got the appointment and ruined the company.

“ I began business as a lawyer, and destroyed all my prospects by admitting, in my first cause, that my client was a knave, and his claim good for nothing ; all of which was exceedingly true ; but I never had an opportunity to admit the same thing of a second.

“ I clapped an M. D. to my name, but of-

fended the few patients who at first encouraged me, by assuring them their complaints were trifling, and could be cured without physic.

“Nay, sir, I even tried my hand at divinity, and might have been comfortably settled for life, had I not shocked my congregation by declaring that creeds, dogmas, and doctrines had nothing to do with religion, that good works were better than strong faith, and that the only duty of the just man was to revere Heaven and love his neighbours. For this frank admission I was discarded by my flock, and excommunicated by the society.

“Sir, there is no end to the persecutions I have endured for truth’s sake. I have been slandered and vilified, ridiculed and beaten—twice caned, four times horse-whipped, and my nose pulled times without number—and all because I practised a virtue commended by every living soul, instilled into children at the fire-side and in the school-house, inculcated from the pulpit, and recommended by

the reprobation so universally adjudged to its antagonist vice. You may ask what cause brought me to this place, since it must be a very extraordinary truth that can deserve the imputation of madness. I know not how that may be. It is possible my truths were all moderate in their character, but it was their number my friends pleaded against me. They did not call me a madman, but they were certain I was—a fool. That, I suppose, was the reason they sent me hither, to reflect on my past life, to marvel at the folly, injustice, and inconsistency of man, and to wonder why he should dignify with the name of virtues the qualities to which he awards the penalties of vices.—But this inconsistency is exemplified more or less strongly in the story of every unlucky person here present—perhaps of every inmate of this Asylum. I would venture a wager in any sum you please—provided I had it—that we might single out any person we pleased from among the multitude, with the certain assurance that his story, truly told,

would be one more illustration added to the many you have heard, of the inconsistency of mankind on this particular subject."

"No doubt of it," said Mr. Ticklum; "and here, as it chances, comes a new companion in misery, upon whom we may try the experiment.—There, you see, Simpkins, the rascally keeper is turning the poor gentleman into the yard among us."

It was as Mr. Ticklum said. At that moment, the gate was opened by one of the keepers, who thrust into the enclosure a very sad and solemn-looking stranger, who, approaching, dropt us a profound congée, and then made as if he would have passed on to bury his woes in the remotest nook of the garden.

"Sir," said Mr. Ticklum, arresting him, "you are welcome to this place of captivity, where all are martyrs together. Sir," he added, putting on again the state of an editor, "we are an enemy of ceremony—pray, sir, allow us to ask who you are?"

“I am,” said the stranger, laying his hand on his heart very mournfully, “the most miserable man in the world.”

“Sir,” said Mr. Ticklum, making the newcomer a bow, and looking as pathetic as he, “we are not in the habit of contradicting a gentleman by word of mouth: but allow us to say, you are mistaken. *We*, sir, are the most miserable man in the world!” And as he spoke, *he* laid his hand on his breast.

“Upon my word, Mr. Ticklum,” said the ex-member of Congress, interfering, with dignity, “you entirely forget yourself—it is *I* who am the most miserable man in the world.”

“Except *me*,” cried Mr. Frankman, looking very much offended: “I beg leave to say——”

“I beg your pardon, gentlemen,” exclaimed the duellist, whom the controversy roused from his silent bench, and brought again among us; “I thought I had long since satisfied you on that score. It is I, and I alone, who am the most miserable of men.”

“It is *I*, sir,” cried another; and the exclamation was echoed by half a dozen others, who came crowding up in confusion, preferring their claims to the distinction of misery. It seemed, indeed, as if the stranger’s confession of sorrows, with which, I fancy, he hoped to propitiate favour, possessed a virtue of another kind, and, like the pebble cast by Jason among the sons of the dragon’s teeth, was only destined to set my new friends by the ears.

It is not an uncommon thing for a man to boast, and even pride himself on, his woes; but I had no idea that absolute rivalry in affliction, the competition for its honours and advantages, ever extended beyond mendicants and poetasters, to whom sorrow and anguish are as the breath of their nostrils. My friends of the madhouse taught me the contrary, by insisting, each with increasing vehemence, that the glory of being the most miserable man in the world belonged to him: the consequence of which was, first, a controversy extremely hot and vociferous, and then, notwithstanding my friendly

endeavours to keep the peace, a furious contest, in which the editor knocked the congressman down, the critic pulled the duellist's nose, and honest John, my introducer, who had taken advantage of the story-telling to snatch a comfortable nap, started up, and called Mr. Frankman by a name highly insulting to a lover of the truth. In fact, I believe they would soon have torn one another to pieces, and perhaps me too, had not the uproar brought the keepers into the yard to compose the quarrel:—a turn of affairs of which I took advantage by making my escape, the moment the gate was opened, from the enclosure and my friends.

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THE EXTRA LODGER.

CHAPTER I.

Among the numberless tyrants, in and out of office, who rule the sovereign American people with rods of iron, none can compare—whether it respects the despotic rigour of their rule, or the patient submissiveness of their subjects—with their high mightinesses, the innkeepers. Steam-boat captains and stage proprietors may, in their vanity, contest with them the claim to superiority in power; and, indeed, the undoubted privileges both these classes possess to maim and kill their customers at will, would

seem to put them at the head of the powerful ; but no honest, disinterested man, who will consider all the circumstances, the power of the lordly Boniface over the comfort of his lodgers, and the uniform despotism of his rule, can hesitate to award the palm to their rivals. In other lands, circumstances have degraded the lords of the spigot into a condition of subservience and vassalage to society ; and they are insultingly regarded, and, incredible as it may appear, they even regard themselves as the servants of the public. Here, in this happy republic, where all are free but the people, they have assumed their proper attitude, as masters of their patrons, whom they rule with autocratic severity grievous to behold and lamentable to suffer. High and low, the princes of metropolitan hotels and the kings of the log-cabin tavern on the wayside, they know their power, and exercise it. The metropolitan potentates, indeed, sometimes affect a certain citizen-kinglike humility, and govern with decency and suavity ; while it may

be observed of the others, their compeers, that the lower you descend in rank among them, the more savage and irrespective becomes their tyranny. Thus, with the lord of your town inn, you may sometimes venture upon a little complaint of the cook and chamber-maid, without fear of being knocked down for impertinence; and, sometimes, in a village hotel, you may prefer a little expostulation on the subject of horse-meat and clean sheets, without the absolute certainty of being turned into the streets. But even here we must not expect always to find our dignitaries in a good humour. The possession of power is a constant provocative to the exercise of it; and we know not when the monarch may put on his robes of state, and shake his sceptre of authority. It is but a little while, as every body knows, since a royal prince, with his whole cortège at his heels, was turned out of doors, or at least refused admission, by two different innkeepers, sceptre in hand. It is true, that, in both these instances,

the royal personage was entirely unknown, being mistaken, in the one case, for an opera fiddler, in the other for something equally insignificant ; otherwise mine hosts had been happy to kiss the dust from his royal shoes, out of a mere republican respect for greatness.

The king of the cabin—your true country tavern-keeper—is quite another sort of person, with whom to complain, to explain, to exhibit any symptoms of rebellious discontent, is to awake the sleeping lion. What cares he for your fine coat, your long dangling watch-chain, your gentlemanly swagger, your titles of distinction—your Colonel or General, your Doctor, your Reverend, your Honourable? You are, sir, his customer; a suitor for meat and drink, which he graciously vouchsafes you, taking no consideration therefor, except a certain number of ninepences, or half-dollars, together with a due addition of reverence naturally belonging to the master of the house that shelters you. His house, though every chamber be reeking with mud and rain, is *his*

house, and if you don't like it, you may leave it; his beds, though forty human souls, with boots on, may have nestled betwixt the unchanged sheets, doing battle all night with Incubus and Succuba, in the shape of those strange bedfellows with which misery makes us acquainted, have harboured your betters, and why therefore should *you* presume to grumble? His table, plentifully or sparsely covered, as the case may be, with uneatable eatables—coffee made, or seeming to be made, of burnt blankets, sodden bread, stale bacon and palpitating chickens, greasy potatoes and withered turnip-tops—is the table that contents *him*, and if you don't like it you may go—to a place entirely unmentionable !

Truly your republican innkeeper is the most mighty of tyrants. You may find him, sometimes, a very amiable personage, as great men sometimes will be ; but take heed you trifle not with his amiableness ; for, verily, he is not a person to be trifled with by any rabblement traveller, for whom he does not care the snap of his independent fingers—no, not he.

In truth, the common country tavern-keepers—those especially in new regions, or at a distance from the great towns—are, for the most part, mere farmers, who have been driven by sheer necessity (not poverty) to open their houses to the public. In very few parts of the land is the country densely enough settled, and the travelling sufficiently great, to support lines of taverns along the roads at convenient distances. The farmer must hang out the bush and play the landlord, or be eaten up by his hospitality. He knows nothing of cooking or housekeeping beyond what he has been accustomed to in his own family, and he cares nothing about learning; in half the instances, he would prefer the traveller's room to his company: it is not therefore surprising his hotel should not be the best in the world, nor himself the most obliging of landlords.

With this condition of things prevailing, it is evident one must not look for any exemplifications of the charming rural hostelries, the little hawthorn-crowned alehouse, so long em-

baled in the pages of English poets and novelists, with its proper familiars, the facetious host, his buxom wife, and trim daughter, all obsequious, bustling, eager to make themselves, and their house, and everything in it, agreeable to your honour. You cannot here say, with any propriety, you will take your ease in your inn, that being the privilege solely of its master; nor can you have any greater expectation of comfort, which is an article seldom put down in the bill of fare. In brief, one should expect nothing; and to the inexperienced traveller I recommend the maxim which observation has shown me to be productive of the best effects in mollifying evils, as well as preventing a hundred inconveniences that might otherwise occur: be submissive; graciously receive, thankfully suffer, pay your money, and depart in peace.

It was once my fate to pass a night in a certain wayside caravansary, among the mountains of Virginia, a lowly and logly habitation, from whose mean appearance no one would have in-

ferred the majestic spirit of the ruler within; up—or rather down to which—for it stood at the bottom of a hill—one fine evening in September, rolled a mail-coach, well crammed with passengers, of whom I, for my sins, was one. We numbered twelve souls in all, nine inside, and three out; of which latter group, I, being somewhat a valetudinarian, was honoured with a seat beside his highness of the whip; while my two companions, the one a Mississippian, the other a varmint, as he called himself, of Tennessee, sat gallantly upon the top, where they rolled and pitched about, as we thundered down the rocky road, in a manner admirable to behold—or, as the Mississippian expressed it, “like two short-tailed dogs in a biling pot”—a resemblance that was somewhat the stronger for the tremendous bow-woughs and yelpings, with which he, sometimes assisted by the Tennessean, beguiled the weariness of the way.

Certainly there never was a jollier set of rantipole personages got together in a mail-

stage before. Besides the Mississippian yelping on the top, there was another of the same tribe in the inside, who could imitate the braying of an ass to perfection—a melody which he kept up in rivalry with his friend and partner aloft. Add to these an Alabamian who sang negro songs; a Rock River Illinois, who whooped like an Indian; a Texian that played the mestang, or wild horse of the prairies, and, besides kicking the bottom nearly from the stage, neighed and whinneyed till the very team-horses on the road responded to the note; and five others who did nothing but scream and laugh to fill up the concert; and you have before you a set of the happiest madbrained roisterers that ever astonished the monarch of a stage-house.

At this place we were destined to sup and lodge; accordingly, in due course of time, we were all seated at the board, where we had the satisfaction of being tyrannised over both by mine host and mine hostess—the one glum yet facetious, the other ugly as ill-temper,

and haughty as a princess. There was nothing at all remarkable in the supper, which was no better nor worse than usual, except the total absence of that *sine qua non* of a Virginia table, fried chickens—and, indeed, of chickens in every shape, there not being so much as a wing or claw on the table. This omission producing a gentle interrogatory, somewhat in the tone of expostulation, from one of the Mississippians, (who, as well as all the other travellers, it is proper to say, was now playing the part of a very modest well-behaved young gentleman,) mine host very wittily gave us to understand, “it was all our own fault, seeing that the diabolical noise we had made, while approaching the house, had scared all his fowls into the mountains.” This, the Mississippian declared, “reminded him of Captain Dobbs’s chickens in Kentucky, which, he had the captain’s own words for it, no sooner caught sight of a traveller approaching, than they immediately took to their heels; being well aware, from long ex-

perience, as Captain Dobbs said, that the visit of a stranger was certain death to them."

Before we had finished supper, a thirteenth guest made his appearance—a tall raw-boned Yankee pedler, it seemed, who drove up in his little wagon through a shower that had begun to fall, and presently entered the supper-room, bearing a pair of saddle-bags which he laid beside him with great care, as if afraid its contents should be injured, if placed out of his protection. He had a very meek, solemn, un-presuming, solitary look, and rather sneaked into than took a chair at the foot of the table; where he waited very submissively for the cup of coffee, which my landlady deigned, after sundry contemptuous looks, and five minutes of delay, to send him. On the whole, he did not seem to produce any more favourable impression upon my fellow travellers, who left him to consume his chickenless supper by himself, while they proceeded to the bar-room to resolve a doubt which had entered the head of the Mis-

Mississippian, Captain's Dobbs's friend—to wit, whether the thunder of their approach had not killed all the mint-plants, and so deprived them of their juleps. This was fortunately proved not to be the case: the young gentlemen concocted their sleeping draughts, smoked their cigars, settled the affairs of the nation, and then, having received a hint that such was the will and pleasure of the landlord, ascended to the travellers' room to seek their beds.

CHAPTER II.

THIS travellers' room was the garret, or the half thereof, the other moiety being partitioned off, and applied to some other purpose ; and as it was neither ceiled nor plastered, it presented no very striking look of luxury or comfort. But it exhibited the rare and captivating spectacle of a dozen different beds, in which each man was to possess, for one night at least, the happiness of sleeping without a bed-fellow. The beds were, moreover, all single ones, one only excepted, which was neither single nor double, and, indeed, was a mere plank stretched between two stools, with a feather-bed

hung over it, pannier-wise ; and so far, it appeared to us, that our landlord, even in his out-of-the-world nook, must have been visited with some inklings of civilisation ; but upon further consideration it was agreed, we owed the size, as well as the number of the couches, to the necessity of the case, the garret being of such a figure as to stow a dozen truckle-beds much more commodiously than half that number of double ones.

Nevertheless, we were all well pleased with the arrangement ; nor did any difficulty present itself, until the braying gentleman, regaling us first with a moderate burst of his music, by way of calling attention, demanded, “ Who the nation was to sleep with the Yankee ? ” a question that no one answered, until he had first popped into, and so secured possession of, his cot ; after which, each swore, with an oath as terrible as was ever sworn in Flanders, the Yankee should not sleep with *him*. Upon this point the determination was quite unanimous. I might, indeed, except myself, having made no

rash vow on the occasion ; which was the more unnecessary, as I had, partly by accident and partly from choice, fallen heir to the narrow bed of plank spoken of before, in which there was no fear of my being troubled with a bedfellow.

We had scarce arranged this important matter, when the supernumerary guest and extra lodger, who had perhaps been detained securing his property for the night, came up stairs, bearing his saddle-bags and a candle, and with hesitating step and modest countenance, stole through the room, looking for an empty bed, but of course without finding any.

“ Perhaps, gentlemen,” said he, with an extremely solemn, woe-begone voice of inquiry, “ some of you can tell me where I am to sleep to-night ?”

“ In paradise, I suppose,” said the braying gentleman ; “ for I’ll be hanged if there’s any room for you here. You see the beds are all full.”

“ I do,” quoth the stranger, looking disconsolately round, “ and they are shocking narrow

ones too. But I rather calculate the landlord meant me to have half a one, somewhere or other, among you?"

"Well, that seems but reasonable," said the Mississippian; and I should be very willing to let you have half of mine; only—" here he turned over the bedclothes and displayed a huge bowie-knife lying on one side of him, and a pistol on the other—" only that I never sleep without my arms, and they are somewhat dangerous when I dream at night, as I always do after a bad supper. 'Pon my soul, sir, I always dream the niggers are murdering me, and so fall to at 'em in a way that's quite a caution! 'Pon my soul, sir, if you had seen me, how I slashed the bed to pieces last night, and shot off the bed-post! Had to pay ten dollars damages to old Skinflint, the landlord!"

The Yankee recoiled with trepidation from this perilous bedfellow, and preferred his request to the Tennessean, representing very piteously that he had an "affection of the head"—though of what kind he did not inform

us—which was always aggravated by want of, or even by uncomfortable sleep. The Tennessean, however, swore he was just as bad as his neighbour the Mississippian, though in another way ; he never could sleep with anybody, without beginning to fight the moment he fell asleep ; and it was but a fortnight ago, he said, that he had gouged an unlucky bedfellow's eyes out.

The Alabamian declared he chewed tobacco in his sleep, and that his quids were to the full as dangerous to a bedmate's eyes as the Tennessean's fingers. The second Mississippian had taken a position directly across the bed, his head sticking out on one side, his legs on the other, in which position only, he swore, he could sleep with any comfort ; and therefore desired the Yankee to apply to some one else ; which he did, though with no better fortune, some excusing themselves on pretences as ridiculous as those I have mentioned, while one or two others, whose wit was not so ready, met his supplicating glances and hesitating applica-

tions with downright refusals. As for myself, the narrowness of my couch was so manifest as to secure me from application.

The poor Yankee, thus rejected on all sides, and with the prospect of remaining bedless for the night, took the desperate resolution of preferring a complaint to his majesty the innkeeper. For this purpose, he opened the door, and called twice or thrice, but with timid tones, to mine host ; who, having already retired to his bed, and not choosing to be troubled, took no notice of the first calls, and only replied to the last by threatening to turn his unfortunate customer out of the house, if he did not keep quiet.

To be turned out of a house in which he was so inhospitably treated, might have seemed no very disagreeable alternative ; but, unluckily, a dismal rain had now commenced falling, and there was no other place of refuge within eight or ten miles.

Nothing remained for the extra lodger but to stretch himself upon the floor ; which he at last

did, but with sundry groans and complaints, pillowing his head upon his saddle bags; in which position he lay until his fellow-travellers, myself with the rest, had all dropt sound asleep.

We had not slept, I imagine, more than a quarter of an hour, when we were all, at the same moment, roused up by a terrible voice crying, in the midst of the room, "If there's no other way with them, cut their aristocratical throats!"

The words and voice were alike alarming; but judge our astonishment when, starting from our beds, we beheld the Yankee, rising half naked from the floor, as grim and gaunt as Don Quixotte himself, holding a bowie-knife, to which the Mississippian's was as a penknife to a razor, and brandishing it with looks of blood and fury. "By snakes and niggers!" cried the braying gentleman, with something like alarm, "he dreams harder than I do!"

"Wake him up, he'll do a mischief," exclaimed others; for we all thought the poor fellow was suffering under some frightful dream.

The Tennessean, bolder than the rest, seized him by the arm; upon which he dropped his knife, and his countenance changing from rage to trepidation, immediately exclaimed,—“I give myself up; I am your prisoner. But take notice, gentlemen, and bear witness for me, I yield to superior force—Give me five minutes to say my prayers!”

“Death and thunder!” cried the Varmint of Tennessee, starting back, “the man is mad!”

And so, indeed, it seemed to us all.

“Give me five minutes to say my prayers,” quoth the Yankee; who, however, instead of dropping upon his knees to pray, burst into tears, and harangued us in somewhat the following words: “I am an honest man and patriot, a democrat and man of the people: I have fought the battle of my country, and I die a Roman hero. You are too many for me, gentlemen—twelve hundred men against one, and a regiment of scalping savages behind you! I surrender, and I am ready to die. I am a democrat. But what is one democrat among

twelve hundred hired myrmidons of power? I know you'll kill me, but I don't care: all I ask of you is to do justice to my memory, to bear witness before the world"—(here his voice was almost drowned in sobs,)—"to bear witness that I die like a brave man—die like a hero—die like a patriot—the victim of despots, and martyr of freedom!"

Great were the consternation and confusion that now prevailed. The man was mad—mad north-north-west, and all round the compass, politically mad—a mad patriot; nobody doubted that. Some asked what was to be done: others would have argued the madman out of his frenzy; others again slipped out of the door, and stood ready for a run.

In the mean while, the maniac, re-inspired by his own eloquence, or the pusillanimity of his enemies, which even a madman might perceive, lifted up his voice again, but lifted it in a tone of defiance.

"You are the hired myrmidons of power!" he cried, "purse-proud rich men—tyrants that

grind the face of the poor—that live on the sweat of the poor man's labour, and rob his hungry children of their food ! I am a poor man, and the poor man's friend : I hate you, I defy you, I call you to the reckoning. Yes !” he roared, snatching up his knife from the floor, and then waving it aloft, as if to unseen backers ; “ your triumph is now over, your hour has come : I call you to the reckoning—to the reckoning of blood !—Advance, men of the people, and cut their tyrannical throats !”

And with that, he advanced himself, flourishing his ferocious weapon against our aristocratic breasts. There was no withstanding that terrific charge ; pellmell we went, one over the other, out the door, which we esteemed ourselves fortunate in being able to close, and thus secure upon the distracted assailant.

We then made our way down to the bar-room, where we found the glum host and his haughty spouse in as great alarm and as elegant dishabille as ourselves, they, and indeed every soul in the house, having been aroused by the madman's vociferations.

What was now to be done? The unfortunate man was still raging; we could hear him thumping against the door, as if endeavouring to break through, and roaring all the while a frenzied cry of "victory!" With that savage knife in his hand—nay, with a dozen knives perhaps—for arms and clothes were all, in the hurry of our flight, left together in the room—who should dare attack and disarm him? Nobody showed an appetite for the enterprise; and although the ugly landlady proposed, in her ecstasy of terror, a plan that might have ended the difficulty—namely, that some of us should take her husband's gun, and *shoot* the bedlamite through the key-hole, (and really she did not seem to consider the shooting a mad Yankee any very atrocious crime,)—the business was ended by our sitting up all night in the bar-room, in extremely simple costume, debating the difficulty.

The terrible din with which we had been ousted from the garret, did not continue long; but was succeeded, first, by a dead, portentous

calm, then by a strange half groaning, half snorting kind of noise, that was represented by some who had the courage once or twice to creep sily to the garret door to listen, to be peculiarly terrific, and which, indeed, lasted all night long.

When the morning broke, we held another consultation, and finally, growing more courageous as the day grew broader, wrought ourselves to the resolution of proceeding in a body to the travellers' room, the landlord magnanimously leading the van, armed with a broad-axe; ourselves intrepidly following at his heels, some carrying such means of defence as could be gathered up, and others cart-ropes and bed-cords to tie the madman, and mine hostess behind with a bulldog. We paused a moment at the door, listening to the groaning sound, which was still kept up, and then softly entered the room; where we had the satisfaction of finding the poor fellow lying very soundly and comfortably asleep in the best bed, sending from his upturned nostrils those anomalous

and horrid sounds which now appeared to us the natural music of sleep. He opened his eyes, stared upon us somewhat inquiringly, yet with a look so extremely natural and lucid that we refrained from laying hands upon him, as we supposed would have been necessary.

“Good morning, gentlemen,” said he, quite like a sensible person; “a fine morning we have after the rain. And a very fine sleep I’ve had too,” he added: “I hope you can say the same?”

“It’s his lucid moment, poor devil,” said the Varmint; and gathering up our indispensables, we all went down to breakfast.

The Yankee was now the observed of all observers—as solemn, as sad, as modest as ever, and, to all appearance, quite unconscious of his late paroxysm. We were all too prudent or generous to remind him of it, even by a distant hint; and, for the same reasons, we all took care not to cross him in anything at table. Whatever dish he looked at was immediately surrendered to him; even the ugly landlady

requested his acceptance of a tumbler of cream she had poured out for her own use, but on which he chanced to cast his eye. And thus it happened that our gentleman, whose appetite had by no means suffered from his affliction, ate the best, as well as the hugest breakfast of all; after which he ordered his horse, called for and paid his bill, with every air of sanity; and then, with every air of sanity, departed.

A few moments after, we were ourselves upon the road thundering along in our mail-coach; and by-and-bye caught sight of our extra lodger on the top of a hill, at a cross road, where, indeed, he seemed waiting for us, as he looked back upon us frequently, while we slowly mounted the hill.

“Mad again!” quoth the braying gentleman, with an air of commiseration—“Poor devil!”

“Gentlemen,” said the madman, touching his hat with an air of great suavity, and giving the sweetest intonation to his sepulchral voice,

“ I believe I forgot to bid you farewell ; at all events, I omitted to express my thanks for the uncommon kindness you all displayed in giving me, a poor afflicted Yankee pedler, so much more bedroom than I had any occasion for.”

“ Oh,” said the Tennessean, having some doubt about the poor fellow’s meaning, but willing to humour him to the best of his power—
“ it is our southern way ; hospitality, sir, mere hospitality.”

“ Sir,” said the pedler, with a grateful look, “ I shall always remember it. But I do assure you, one bed would have served my purpose just as well as a dozen.”

“ No doubt, sir,” said the Varmint ; “ but the truth is, as you were a sick man ——”

“ Only a little affliction in my head,” said the stranger, touching his cracked *os frontis*.

“ Yes, sir—a little affliction,”—rejoined the Tennessean ; for which reason, each man desired to give you his bed ; and *that*,” added the gentleman, pleased at his ingenuity, “ is the reason you had all the beds ! ”

The pedler gave us a satanic grin, and touching his forehead again, exclaimed, after sneezing and blowing his nose in a highly natural manner, "Remember me, gentlemen! I have an affliction here, to be sure, but—I never lost a bed by it!"

With that he whipped up his horse, and cheering him on the way with a laugh that sounded like the chuckle of a kettle-drum, it was so deep and tremendous, left us to our meditations.

"Bitten!" said the Varmint, giving a sneaking look around him.

"Choused out of bed—humbugged every man of us!" growled the Alabamian.

The Mississippian jumped on his feet, and roaring—"Bray, gentlemen, bray—we are all jackasses together!" set us the example, by pouring his most exquisitely donkeyish note upon the ears of morning.

THE
ARKANSAS EMIGRANTS.

CHAPTER I.

FIFTY years ago, a philosopher sitting in his closet, constructing the political horoscope of our new-born nation, proved most decidedly, among other undeniable propositions, that the Kentucky and Niagara lands, then all the rage among emigrants, must continue to be *frontier* lands for a century to come, and deplored the infatuation of men who—neglecting the unoccupied lands east of the mountains, of which there were enough, and more than enough, for the wants of many generations—exiled them-

selves to such distant places, where they must "never more hope to see their parents, their brothers and sisters, and other relations and friends whom they left behind," where, during all that coming century, themselves, and their children after them, must fight with desperate savages for the privilege of sowing and reaping their corn-fields; and where, worst of all, after the trouble of fighting and reaping, they must, for lack of a market, sell their wheat for tenpence a bushel, to buy dollar blankets at half a guinea apiece.

To us, who in half a century have seen it so signally falsified, the prediction appears sufficiently ridiculous. The "wilderness contries" now form the heart and centre of the republic, and are, in the language of speculation, an *old* country, whence new emigrants daily depart for a new border; which, in its turn, becomes in a few years a cordon of sovereign states, sending out, in like manner, their hosts of voluntary exiles.

And thus the work goes on—the building up

of a nation such as the world has never yet seen, such as it has never yet imagined. Croakers sit at home and prate of dangers from abroad, of political corruption and social disorganisation, as heralds of coming convulsion; but, all the while, the emigrant is on the road, with his plough and ox, his axe and rifle, his sons and daughters, to add a new state to the confederacy, a new arm to the Briareus of nations whom no Jupiter can hurl from the seat of power, no Ætna overwhelm. The roads are full of teams, the rivers alive with steam-boats: turn where you will, you see no map in the human billow, which, rolling from the east like the bore of a mighty river, the rushing *mas-caret* of the Amazon or the Ganges, sweeps over forest and prairie, in its march to the Pacific Ocean. When that has been gained, when the Oregon boasts as many steamers as the Mississippi, and the Chippewyans are as well pierced with railroads as the Alleghanies, we may look into the magician's glass for the fate of the enormous empire—or rather for the fate of other

empires, its outstripped and overshadowed rivals.

The rage of emigration, for which we need not leave our homes to witness the effects, one is almost tempted to consider a feature peculiar to the American race. Pressed by no actual necessity—no pinching poverty, such as drives the poor Irishman from his moorland cot, no galling oppression of tyrant and bigot, only to be escaped by expatriation ; yet ever changing, ever on the march, seeking a new home,—it would really seem as if there was something *nomadic* in our natures, a principle of levity and restlessness, from which the philosopher may, according to his mood, augur a superabundance of good or evil for the republic. I have sometimes, while rambling among the long trains of emigrant wagons filling a southern or western road, asked myself whether the love of home—that tender, and lovely, and soul-enriching sentiment, so distinctive of the race from which we boast to descend—was not a poetic fiction in America. Those men of sub-

stance—that Virginia planter with his hundred slaves, journeying to the cotton-grounds of Alabama; that comfortable farmer of Pennsylvania, with his half a dozen wagons, and furniture in them enough to furnish out a garrison, wending his way to the distant Wisconsin;—do these men remember with no regretful longings the antique manor-house on the Rappahannock, the old homestead among the blue hills of Susquehanna? The Virginian will tell you his lands are worn out, and that he left them to save his “hands” from starvation, or the market; the Pennsylvanian assures you he has seven sons to be made landholders at his death. Ask that gallant New-Yorker what carries *him* so far from home—he is going to buy up the site of a county town, and convert five thousand dollars into a million: that young lawyer from Maryland—he wants to get into the legislature, and thence to Congress: that bustling Yankee—he will be a merchant, and make his fortune. In short, you will learn anything, except that the adventurers regret the homes they have left

behind them. The love of novelty ; the love of freedom—that freedom which men feel upon the boundless prairie, or in the measureless forest, where the soul hath elbow-room, and is not conscious of too many superiors—and the love of wealth, have swallowed up the gentler love of the place of birth.

Yet all are not thus insensible. Poverty, defeated hopes, humbled pride, send also their representatives to the border, among whom one may sometimes see an eye turned in tears to the blue horizon behind, and visages full of the thoughts of home—of home remembered as a lost paradise, dearer than anything to be gained in the land of promise.

One evening, rambling upon a bluff on the Mississippi, it was my chance to witness the embarkation of a family of emigrants, whom I had previously noticed descending to the boat, which was to carry them across the river to the dark frowning forests of Arkansas. It was a spring evening, and the season and the hour united to give beauty to the scene. Upon

the bluff, groves of locust-trees shed a delicious perfume; and the glories of sunset lay upon the woods beyond the river. It was at this pleasant hour that the family, consisting of five persons—the father, a man declining into the vale of years; three sons, one a mere urchin of six or seven years old, the others youths of eighteen and twenty; and a daughter of perhaps seventeen—descended to the river. The daughter, with the little boy, was packed away in a car-riole—or, in western parlance, carry-all—of no very distinguished appearance, driven by a gray-headed old negro servant. The father and second son rode on horseback; while the first-born, with a second negro, trudged manfully along on foot.

There was nothing, at first sight, very peculiar in the appearance of the family; but, by-and-bye, the daughter getting out, to walk down the hill with her eldest brother, I observed her look wistfully backwards, until a jerk from the brother—a fiery and impatient youth—compelled her to proceed. I fancied I could per-

ceive a quivering of her lip, as she turned from the eastern sky ; but, at all events, there was something in her countenance, its beauty and melancholy air, perhaps—which, notwithstanding her plain attire—indeed, the clothes of all were of the plainest materials—and the general look of poverty about the little train, almost convinced me they had once known their better days.

They reached the river ; the carriole was driven into the boat, which was pushed from the shore. At that moment, an idle youth who had strolled from the village near, and taken his seat under a locust-tree on the edge of the bluff, began to play upon a flute which he had brought with him ; and, as it happened, his first tune was the tender and well-known melody of “ Home, sweet Home.” The notes reached the departing family, and what a world of memories seemed suddenly to be conjured among them ! The daughter started up, and with a wild cry sprang towards the shore ; and would, indeed, have fallen into the river, but

for the father, who caught her in his arms. For a moment, all was agitation on board the little bark ; the brothers pressed to their sister's side, one, it seemed, to reprove, the other to console and soothe, but all expressing in their countenances a world of longing regret for the home they had left, never perhaps again to see.

How rapidly fancy, awakened by that thrilling cry, read in the visages of the emigrants—that gray old man, so stern yet sorrowing; the daughter clinging to his neck, yet still gazing wildly back to the receding shore; the second son lifting his little brother into his arms, and covering him with kisses; the first-born looking so cold and haughty, yet unhappy—how rapidly fancy traced the whole history of the little family ! You could not mistake that old man, bearing himself, in his sorrow, so loftily. He is a Virginian—an “old Virginian”—one of the fine old race of past days—a gentleman, but an unfortunate one. You see him in his brave old house at home. It is on the

Potomac, perched upon a hill, overshadowed by oaks and pines, planted by a grandsire some five or six generations removed : his negro quarters make a village ; and so do his stables ; for truly he delights in his horse-flesh, and looks with contempt on congressmen. He hath his friends about him, a multitude of goodly people old and young, cavaliers that know the points of a horse or bottle of champagne ; and dames and beaux that devote the days to picnicking and the nights to dancing. If a stranger passeth him by, he sendeth or goeth out to entreat the honour of his company. His eldest son reads law, and runs races, in preparation for the legislature ; his second has some thoughts of doing the same, but is in no hurry, and, in the meanwhile, squires his sister to and fro, and writes verses for the young ladies ; his sister laughs her life away in the dance and on horseback, and jeers at a despairing lover, for whom she would at any serious moment jump into the river ; and the little boy spins his top and twirls his marbles, or plays cockhorse with

Sambo or Jimbo, whom he trounces whenever he tires of their assistance. All is joy and jollity in the old gentleman's house; and when he hears his neighbours complain of hard times, or reads the melancholy croakings in his county newspaper, he says, "Men are blockheads," swears "the world turns round to-day as it did the day before," and orders old Cæsar to bring him some fresh mint and a bottle of brandy.

In the meanwhile, a storm is brewing: crops fail, the races are run wrong; there are some rascally mortgages that plague him, and bonds and notes of hand have fallen due at the most unexpected moment. He receives letters from persons whom he calls "pitiful fellows," and others again throw him into a passion. He is visited by lawyers, who are agreeable at dinner, but throw him into such a ferment before departing, that he flings his son's law-books out the window, swearing, "no son of his shall become a rascally attorney." Finally, the sheriff visits him, and then he is—ruined. His horses

gone—his negroes, his lands, his father's house—all departed from him, the proud old man turns his face to the wilderness—to the furthest wilderness—where he may, with less shame, descend to the labour that is to repair his broken fortunes.

And here he is, at last, upon the Mississippi, his wilderness in sight, his eye turned back like his children's, his brain busy with the old days, his heart—ay, all their hearts, full of home and Virginia. You may read his thoughts: he thinks of his proud domains, the inheritance of his children, now in the possession of a stranger; of the log-cabin, in which he must bury the daughter of his pride and affections; and his heart sickens at the vision.

His sons remember their horses and hounds, their balls and their barbecues, their wealth and influence, their brilliant hopes and towering prospects, and contrast them with the life of toil and obscurity to which they are hastening, never, perhaps, to emerge from it. Their sister thinks—of what? Ah, yes, of her lover!

She hears his footstep on the gravel-walk at home, the tramp of his horse in the old avenue, his vows of affection are still ringing in her ears—ringing, while the rush of the Mississippi against his farther bank, and the crash of falling trees, awake her to a consciousness of separation.

The boat touches the strand: they are in Arkansas, where fancy as readily pictures the final history of the whole family. The father will prosper; he will be again a wealthy planter, with a hundred negroes around him; and in ten years he will go to Congress; not that he loves Congress any more than ever, but that he may take a peep at Virginia on the way, and show “the knaves who ruined him” how they have made his fortune; they shall see him richer, and higher, and prouder, than ever. His sons—alas, the second one will die in a year, of fever; the first-born, so fierce of aspect and temper, will, still earlier perhaps, perish in a brawl, the victim of a bowie-knife. The boy, under the gentle influence of his sister,

will grow up less wild and wayward, and in him the father will be content, and cease to grieve for his first-born. As for the daughter, so melancholy, yet so beautiful, she will—marry and forget her sorrows.

THE
FASCINATING POWER OF REPTILES.

CHAPTER I.

IT was once my fortune to be arrested by floods, in a certain village of the south-west, where, there being few other means of amusement in my power, I was glad to take refuge in the woods, rambling repeatedly among the grand old trees, and penetrating into shadowy solitudes, where the strange and mournful hum of locusts, perched in myriads among the boughs, was mingled with the chirp of nesting birds and the rustle of snakes and rabbits,

driven by the waters from their favourite swamps.

In the course of one of these rambles, my ears were saluted by a sudden squeaking and wailing, of a very direful character, which I by-and-bye found proceeded from a catbird, whose motions attracted my attention. She was fluttering about a bush, occasionally darting to the ground, from which she rose with a shriek, to flutter and dart again ; and, in short, betraying so much, and such unusual, agitation, that my curiosity was aroused, and I stepped forward to unravel the mystery.

The mystery was soon explained. Beneath the bush was a huge black snake, swaying his head to and fro among the branches, as if looking for the easiest means of climbing it ; or, perhaps, engaged in wheedling, serpent-like, the poor catbird to descend—at all events, so much engrossed in his occupation, whatever it may have been, as to take no notice of my approach—a slight which I immediately avenged by catching up a stick and despatching him at a blow.

“Bravo!” cried the catbird, or seemed to cry it: certainly, she uttered a squeak strongly expressive of delight, and fluttered and tumbled about my head in a very antic and familiar way, chirping and chattering what I could not doubt were meant to be grateful thanks for the service I had rendered her; and then darted into the bush, where I found her nest, containing three or four callow young, which she suffered me to look at, and even to handle, without seeming to be greatly alarmed, or even moving more than a yard or two from the bush. It is a pity, poor catbird, thou hast so gray-malkin a voice! Were it not for that, no bird would be a greater favourite with man. None shows such a predilection of his society, none so much confidence in his honour and generosity; and none, while admitting his familiarities with her young, will more jealously and courageously defend them from the attack of enemies.

I sat down upon a fallen tree hard by, to ponder upon these things—upon the good act I had performed, and upon a question which ob-

truded itself into my mind, namely, whether this might not have been a case of *charming*, of which I had previously heard, and read so much. It *might* be, for aught I could tell, that the black snake had been throwing his spells around the poor bird ; but it was quite as probable the sable sinner was simply climbing towards the nest, to make a dinner of her young—an attempt sufficient of itself to account for all her maternal agitation.

This little incident threw my mind into a train of thought on the subject of reptile fascination, which—the dead snake lying at my side, the happy mother chirping in her bush hard by—I indulged in, until I arrived at the results to which I have endeavoured to give expression in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

FOR six thousand years—that is to say, ever since the old serpent beguiled mother Eve in the garden—the existence of the fascinating faculty has been a subject of controversy betwixt the *profanum vulgus* and the sages of science,—the one affirming the fact as a thing observed, the other denying it upon the strength of arguments drawn from its apparent impossibility. At the present day the question stands precisely where it did in the beginning, the vulgar observing and affirming as before, the wise man arguing and denying: and in this vexed condition it may perhaps remain for six thousand years longer, unless it should be my

good fortune, in these present pages, to settle the difficulty, and lay the question at rest for ever.

And, first, I profess to be a profound and devout believer in the whole doctrine of fascination; having quite satisfied my mind, after a long course of observation and inquiry, that the faculty in question does exist, and has existed from the remotest ages, in the reptile family, to which I am inclined to limit it. I am not, indeed, ignorant of the claims of animals of another class to the possession of the faculty—for example, the syrens and lamiae of ancient days, and the mermaids of a later period: but as the syrens and mermaids enchanted merely with fine music, the “dulcet and harmonious breath,” with which even a mortal may draw souls of out men’s bodies, and as the lamiae were half snake at the best, I think they cannot be ranked in the same category with animals that charm—like Greek sorcerers and Yankee magnetisers—by the mere force of a look, the magic of an evil eye. Such are your true fascinators; and such belong only to the reptile race.

All reptiles seem, in former times, to have been considered charmers; but the faculty is now claimed to exist only among a few species—the *cobra* of Africa and India, (the supposed *basilisk* of the ancients,) the European viper, and the rattlesnake and black snake of America; of which the two last are, by general consent, placed at the head of the tribe, as possessing much higher, and more frequently employed, powers of fascination than the others. Their supremacy over the others named, I do not doubt; but as I am of opinion the list of fascinating reptiles is much more extensive than is generally supposed, so also I believe that there are other reptiles, not hitherto suspected as charmers, that possess the faculty in a still higher degree of perfection.

The facts upon which observers have founded their belief, will naturally form the first subject of attention; many of these being, apart from their extraordinariness, of a character so well attested, that a very great philosopher, no less a man than Sir Hans Slcane, the founder of the Bri-

tish Museum, declared "there was no reason to question them." Indeed, the facts themselves seem to be pretty generally admitted among the philosophers, who confine their opposition chiefly to the inferences, and seek, by explanations of their own, to rob the reptile of his virtue, and his exploits of their marvel and mystery. But let us examine the facts first, and the explanations afterwards.

The chief victims of the magical power are supposed to be the smaller birds and animals—sparrows, catbirds, dormice, squirrels, "and such like, which, though sitting upon the branch of a tree of considerable height," says the philosopher above mentioned, "shall, by such stedfast or earnest-looking of the snake, fall dead into his mouth."

According to the more modern belief, the charmed animal makes many, though unavailing, efforts to break through the bonds of fascination, the birds, in particular, fluttering for a long time around the destroyer, before they

finally drop into his remorseless jaws. Instances of the fascination of such small creatures are extremely numerous, and authenticated by persons of the greatest respectability. Thus we have an instance of the charming of a blue jay by a black snake, endorsed by the Rev. President Dwight; another of a squirrel, authenticated by Mr. Chief Justice Dudley of Massachusetts, a Fellow of the Royal Society; and twenty similar ones by Professor Kalm; not to speak of other persons of equal weight of character. A very circumstantial account is given by Dr. Todd, of Vermont, of a case—it might almost be called a *double* case of fascination—witnessed by himself, and chronicled by the philosophic Samuel Williams, LL.D., in his Natural and Civil History of that state—a gentleman who laid the scientific world under obligation by actually counting the leaves on a maple tree! a feat of arithmetical dexterity only rivalled by the exploit of old Tom Fuller, the (in his day) celebrated negro calculator of

Virginia, who began his mathematical studies by counting *the hairs on a cow's tail* !*

“Walking,” says Dr. Todd, “in a field in Connecticut, near a small grove of walnut trees, I saw a sparrow circling in the air, just in the margin of the wood, and making dreadful moans of distress. Immediately the former cir-

* The powers of mental calculation possessed by this poor negro, who could *neither read nor write*, and who—to show that his own laborious exertions, and no miracle of nature, had made him what he was—could remember the time when he thought himself “a very clever fellow,” upon having learned to count a hundred, were very extraordinary indeed ; and in the rapidity with which he arrived at his results, he has, perhaps, never been surpassed by any other calculating machine, human or mechanical. To the question, “how many seconds a man had lived, who was seventy years seventeen days and twelve hours old,” he returned a correct answer in the short space of *a minute and a half*. This calculation was, at the same time, made in the usual way, with pen and paper, by one of the gentlemen present, who told old Tom “he was wrong, and that the sum was not so great as he had said ;” upon which the old man hastily replied, “’Top, massa, you forget de *leap year*.” On adding the seconds of the leap years to the others, the amount of the whole in both their sums agreed exactly.

To this note I will merely add, for the satisfaction of the inquisitive, that Dr. Williams found 21,192 leaves on the maple, and old Tom Fuller 2,872 hairs on the cow's tail.

cumstances occurred," (he had seen an instance of charming in his boyhood, but had been frightened away by the charmer,) "and I approached with caution within twenty feet of a black snake, about seven feet long, having a white throat, and of the kind which the people there call *runners* or *choking-snakes*. The snake lay stretched out in a still posture: I viewed him and the bird near half an hour. The bird, in every turn in its flight, descended nearer the object of its terror, until it approached the mouth of the serpent. The snake, by a quick motion of its head, seized the bird by the feathers, and plucked out several. The bird flew off a few feet, but quickly returned. The snake continued to pluck the feathers at every flight of the bird, until it could no longer fly. The bird would then hop up to the snake and from him, until it had not a feather left, except on its wings and head. The snake now killed it by breaking its neck, by an amazing sudden motion: he did not devour it, but cast it a little off, and continued his station. Now the tragedy

was to be again repeated ; for another bird of the same kind, which had shown signs of distress during the first tragedy, was fascinated to the jaws of the monster in the same circling manner as the former, and suffered the loss of some feathers. I could no longer stand neuter. With indignation I attacked the hated reptile, but he escaped me. The living bird was liberated from his fangs. The dead one I picked up and showed to my friends, destitute of feathers as before mentioned."

One may judge of the wondrous strength of the charm exercised in this instance, when we find the poor sparrows holding still to be *plucked*, as well as eaten.

Equally circumstantial is the account given by Colonel Beverly, in his history of Virginia, of the charming of a hare (*Americé*, rabbit) by a rattlesnake, a spectacle witnessed by himself and two other gentlemen, his companions. "It happened thus," quoth the historian: "One of the company, in his search for the best cherries," (they had ridden into an orchard by the road-

side,) “espied the hare sitting: and although he went close by her, she did not move, till he (not suspecting the occasion of her gentleness) gave her a lash with his whip; this made her run about ten feet, and then sit down again. The gentleman not finding the cherries ripe, immediately returned the same way, and near the place where he struck the hare, he espied a rattlesnake. Still, not suspecting the charm, he goes back about twenty yards to a hedge to get a stick to kill the snake, and, at his return, found the snake removed and coiled in the same place whence he had moved the hare. This put him into immediate thoughts of looking for the hare again, and soon he espied her about ten feet off the snake, in the same place to which she had been started when he whipped her. She was now lying down, but would sometimes raise herself on her forefeet, struggling as it were for life, or to get away; but could never raise her hinder parts from the ground, and then would fall flat on her side again, panting vehemently. In this condition the hare and

snake were when he called me ; and though we were all three come up within fifteen feet of the snake, to have a full view of the whole, he took no notice at all of us, nor so much as gave a glance towards us. There we stood at least half an hour, the snake not altering a jot, but the hare often struggling and falling on its side again, till at last the hare lay still, as dead, for some time : then the snake moved out of his coil, and slid gently and smoothly towards the hare, *his colours at that instant being ten times more glorious and shining than at other times.* As the snake moved along, the hare happened to fetch another struggle ; upon which the snake made a stop, lying at his length till the hare lay quiet again for a short space ; and then he advanced again till he came to the hare,"—and, to shorten the worthy historian's story, he swallowed it.

It would seem that, in this case, the hare actually gave up the ghost before the serpent seized him, so mortally efficacious was the charm. But at this we ought not to be surprised. Le-

vaillant, the celebrated naturalist and traveller, relates two instances, that occurred under his own observation, of deaths thus produced, the one of a shrike, which was killed by a snake three and a half feet off, the other a mouse destroyed by a reptile at double the distance—the distances having been carefully measured by the accurate philosopher. “I stripped,” says he, “the bird before the whole company, and made them observe that it was untouched, and had not received the slightest wound. Upon taking up the mouse,” he adds, “it expired in my hand, without its being possible for me to discover, by the most attentive examination, what had occasioned its death.”

Now are we to consider the charming faculty capable of being exercised only at the expense of the smaller and meaner races of animals. It will be easy to show, that when a snake has a mind for higher game, he has but to turn his eyes upon it, and thus overcome any animal he has a fancy for. It is but a month or two since we had an account in the newspapers of the

killing of a huge rattlesnake in Alabama, a monster thirteen and a half feet long, in whose maw was discovered a full-grown fox. This, I take it, was manifestly a case of fascination; for it is quite impossible to suppose any fox in the world would have suffered himself to be eaten by a snake, unless the latter had charmed the cunning out of him.

But let us skip all intermediate animals, and prove that the fascinating faculty is sometimes powerful enough even to enthrall *human beings*—that men, women, and children have been brought as thoroughly under its sway as the meanest mouse or sparrow that ever squeaked in vain to a serpent for mercy.

I might, I think, with the utmost propriety, include in this category the instance of a little child of eighteen months or two years old, who, a few years since, having had his dinner crammed into his hand, stole out of his father's cabin to munch it at liberty, and was soon after, to the horror of his parents, discovered under a bush, stuffing his apple-pie down the

throat of a black snake. To think that any thing short of fascination could have choused a hungry urchin of two years old out of his dinner, I hold to be midsummer madness ; and accordingly I put this down in my tablets as an instance of the fascination of a human being by a serpent ; though sufficiently provided with other cases, which the reader will perhaps hold to be still more striking and satisfactory.

Dr. Williams, of whom I have already made honourable mention, has added, in his history, to the case mentioned, several instances of the fascination of human beings by reptiles, all of them so well authenticated, and so curious in themselves, that it would be a sin of the greatest magnitude to pass them by.

The first is a story, authenticated by Samuel Beach, a naturalist, of two boys in New Jersey, who, being in the woods looking for cattle, lighted by chance upon a large black snake ; upon which, one of them, an inquisitive imp, immediately resolved to ascertain by experiment whether the snake, so celebrated for its

powers, could charm or fascinate *him*; he requested his companion to take up a stick, and keep a good eye upon the snake, to prevent evil consequences, while he made trial of its powers. "This," says Mr. Beach, "the other agreed to do; when the first advanced a few steps nearer the snake, and made a stand, looking steadily on him. When the snake observed him in that situation, he raised his head with a quick motion, and the lad says that at that instant there appeared something to flash in his eyes, which he could compare to nothing more similar than the rays of light thrown from a glass or mirror when turned in the sunshine: he said it dazzled his eyes; at the same time the colours appeared very beautiful, and were in large rings, circles, or rolls, and it seemed to be dark to him everywhere else, and his head began to be dizzy, much like being over swift running water. He then says, he thought he would go from the snake; and, as it was dark everywhere but in the circles, he was fearful of treading anywhere else; and as they still

grew in less circumference, he could not see where to step : but as the dizziness in his head still increased, and he tried to call his comrade for help, but could not speak, it then appeared to him as though he was in a vortex or whirlpool, and that every turn brought him nearer the centre. His comrade, who had impatiently waited, observing him move forward to the right and left, and at every turn approach nearer the snake, making a strange groaning noise, not unlike a person in a fit of the nightmare, he said he could stand still no longer, but immediately ran and killed the snake, which was of the largest size. The lad that had been charmed was much terrified, and in a tremor ; his shirt was in a few moments wet with sweat, he complained much of a dizziness in his head, attended with pain, and appeared to be in a melancholy, stupid situation for some days."

Another case is given on the authority of Col. Claghorn of Rutland, Vt., and relates to two men of Salisbury in Connecticut, named

Baker and Nichols. "Going towards the meeting-house in that place, they discovered a large rattlesnake in a plain open piece of land. The snake lay coiled up in a posture of defence. To attack him with safety, they procured a long slender pole or switch, with which they could reach him without being in any danger from his motions. As the snake could not escape, they diverted themselves with irritating him with their pole, without giving him any considerable wound. They had carried on this business some time, during which the snake had repeatedly attempted to spring upon them from his coils, and to escape by running, and discovered uncommon appearances of rage and disappointment. Being prevented in all his attempts to escape from or to bite his opposers, he suddenly stretched himself at his full length, and fixed his eyes on the man who was tickling him with the end of the pole. The snake lay perfectly still, and Mr. Nichols kept on the same motions with his switch. When this scene had continued for a short time, Mr

Nichols seemed to incline his body more and more towards the snake, and began to move towards him in a very slow and irregular manner. Baker, who stood looking on, noticed these appearances, and called to Nichols to desist from the business, and despatch the snake. He took no notice of these admonitions, but appeared to have his whole attention fixed on the snake, was observed to be gradually moving towards him, to have a pale aspect, and to be in a profuse sweat. Alarmed with the prospect, Baker took him by the shoulders, gave him a violent shake, pulled him away by force, and inquired what was the matter. Nichols, thus forced from the scene, made an uncommon mournful noise of distress, appeared to be uncommonly and universally affected, and in a few minutes replied to the inquiries, that he did not know what ailed him, that he could not tell how he felt, that he had never felt so before, that he did not know what was the matter with him, but was very unwell."

A third case is the fascination of a lady of

Lansingburg, on the North River, vouched for by Mr. Watkins, a minister of the gospel, whom she informed of the adventure. The spell was in this case relieved by a passer-by ; when the disenchanted lady immediately felt "as though she had been among poisonous herbs, itching, &c., which issued in a long fit of sickness, which her physician ascribed to the fascination of the snake ; and she had not recovered," says the reverend narrator, "when I saw her."

The fourth case, recorded by Dr. Williams, is still more interesting, being the direct personal account of the sufferer himself, a Mr. Elias Willard of Tinmouth, Vermont, whom Dr. Williams characterises as "a man of much information, virtue, and veracity."

"When I was a boy about thirteen years old," says Mr. Willard, "my father sent me into a field to mow some briers. I had not been long employed when I discovered a large rattlesnake, and looked round for something to kill him ; but not readily discovering a weapon,

my curiosity led me to view him. He lay coiled up, with his tail erect, and making the usual singing noise with his rattles. I had viewed him but a short time, when the most vivid and lively colours that imagination can paint, and far beyond the powers of the pencil to imitate, among which yellow was the most predominant, and the whole drawn into a bewitching variety of gay and pleasing forms, were presented to my eyes; at the same time my ears were enchanted with the most rapturous strains of music, wild, lively, complicated, and harmonious, in the highest degree melodious, captivating, and enchanting, far beyond anything I ever heard before or since, and indeed far exceeding what my imagination in any other situation could have conceived. I felt myself irresistibly drawn toward the hated reptile; and as I had been often used to seeing and killing rattlesnakes, and my senses were so absorbed by the gay vision and rapturous music, I was not for some time apprehensive of much danger: but suddenly recollecting what

I had heard the Indians relate (but what I had never before believed) of the fascinating power of these serpents, I turned with horror from the dangerous scene; but it was not without the most violent efforts that I was able to extricate myself. All the exertions I could make with my whole strength were hardly sufficient to carry me from the scene of horrid yet pleasing enchantment; and while I forcibly dragged off my body, my head seemed to be irresistibly drawn to the enchanter by an invisible power. And I fully believe that in a few moments longer it would have been wholly out of my power to make an exertion sufficient to get away. The latter part of the scene I was extremely frightened, and ran as fast as possible towards home, my fright increasing with my speed. The first person I saw was my uncle, who, discovering my fright, ran to meet me, and asked the occasion of it: I told him I had been frightened by a rattlesnake, but was in too great a perturbation to relate the whole. He rallied me for my pusillanimity, and took me

by the hand ; and we went to the place where the snake was still lying, which was soon despatched by my uncle. I then related the story to him, and have since told it to many other persons. The night following, I never closed my eyes. The same scene continually haunted my imagination. Whether the agitation was occasioned merely by the recollection of what had passed, or whether the operation of the charm still had some real effect upon the nervous system, I cannot determine."

To these instances must be added another—also in the words of the victim—related by Levaillant. The subject of the adventurer was a captain in the British army. "While in garrison in Ceylon," said the soldier, and "amusing myself one day hunting in a marsh, I was, in the course of my sport, suddenly seized with a convulsive and involuntary trembling, different from anything I had ever experienced, and at the same time was strongly attracted, and in spite of myself, to a particular spot in the marsh. Directing my eyes to the spot, I dis-

covered, with feelings of horror, a serpent of enormous size, whose look instantly pierced me. Having, however, not yet lost all power of motion, I embraced the opportunity, before it was too late, and saluted the reptile with the contents of my fusee. The report was a talisman that broke the charm. All at once, as if by miracle, my convulsion ceased ; I felt myself able to fly ; and the only inconvenience of this extraordinary adventure was a cold sweat, which was doubtless the effect of my fear, and of the violent agitation my senses had undergone."

The above case is the more remarkable, as the gallant captain was charmed even before he had ~~seen~~ the snake that charmed him ; so that it seems the eyes of a reptile are not his only tools of trade.

A very marvellous case, a year or two since, ran through the newspapers, of a gentleman in Georgia, who, being out fishing on the banks of a wooded river, and having little of the luck, and none of the philosophy, of honest old Isaac Walton, stuck his rod in the mud, and

fell asleep, during which he was, in a very dastardly manner, set upon by a rattlesnake, who charmed him, and would perhaps have devoured him, had it not been for a rival black snake (or king-snake, as it is called in that part of the world,) who, luckily, at that moment appeared, and ended the spell by darting upon the enchanter, and squeezing him to death.

To these cases I cannot avoid adding another, perhaps more singular than any yet recorded, and related to me by the subject, an honest old negro of Delaware, for whose veracity, in this particular case at least, I am quite willing to stand sponsor. Old Bob, for such was his name, was ditching in his master's meadow, a place famous for all kinds of snakes, venomous ones excepted; a circumstance no wise agreeable to Old Bob, who held all reptiles in equal horror and detestation, and had, in especial, a great dread of their powers of fascination. While toiling thus, in constant alarm, barefooted, in the shallow trench he was excavating among sedges and splatterdocks, he was

suddenly terrified at the sight of a snake's head peering out of the mud and water within six inches of his shins. "Lora my! massa,"—he was used to exclaim, while telling his story, and endeavouring to explain his terrible sensations—"saw his eyes a peepin' out of his black head—saw de fiah a flashin' out of 'em, guy! like fiah a flashin' out of a gun: golly my! nebber war so scared. Peeped me right in the face—Oh, pshaw! nebber felt so in my life. Wanted to run, massa, but no more run than a barn-door; stuck fast in the mud—couldn't move—all over with niggah!"—In short, Old Bob, after a terrible paroxysm of fright and fascination together, that bound him for a moment hand and limb, bethought him suddenly of the ditching spade still in his grasp; with which, urged by desperation, he aimed a terrible blow at the head, and succeeded in slicing off—not the head of a snake, but the best part of his own great toe!—which, tilted up by a clod, was the serpent that had fascinated him, there being no other, at that moment, in sight.

These remarkable facts, which philosophers are loath to attribute to a magical faculty of fascination in the reptiles that play so important a part in them, they have endeavoured to explain away by sundry ingenious theories, which may now be briefly noticed.

The first which I shall notice, because the most recent, and because it has most acceptance among unbelievers, is that of an American philosopher, the late distinguished Dr. Barton, who, in a paper printed in an early volume of the Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, had the credit of demolishing all previous theories, as well as annihilating the fascinating power itself—a credit which he enjoyed until a very recent period, when the great Cuvier petrified the philosophic world by declaring that the subject of reptile fascination was by no means cleared up, but, on the contrary, as liable to controversy as ever. Dr. Barton explained everything by referring to the well-known thievish propensities and hungry appetites of reptiles, and the devoted attach-

ment, equally notorious, of the lesser animals, especially birds, to their young ; in the defence of which from the attacks of the rapacious enemy, the latter would naturally display much maternal anxiety, and as naturally sometimes, by mere accident, fall into the power of the assailant. It is highly probable, or indeed quite certain, that small birds have often thus heroically sacrificed themselves, and that observers have wrongfully attributed their death to fascination ; but as it does not appear that any of the *human beings*, whose cases have been mentioned, had any callow broods to take care of, it is quite evident the theory of Dr. Barton will not meet all cases, and is therefore not the true one.

Professor Kalm and Sir Hans Sloane were of opinion, that the animals supposed to be fascinated had been first *bitten* by the charmers, and that their agitation, cries, and fruitless struggles to escape, were the natural effects of an envenomed wound and approaching death. This solution cannot be admitted ; because ani-

mals, as experience shows, when bitten by reptiles, are always wise enough to take to their wings or heels;—because, bitten or not, the moment the charm is interrupted, the animal flees or flies away;—and because it will not apply to animals charmed by black snakes, whose bite is not at all venomous: not to speak of the fact that the shrike and the mouse so carefully examined by Levailant, and our human sufferers as above mentioned, had in no case received so much as a scratch.

Other persons have thought, that, as all animals are subject to disease, and hundreds of the smaller ones, especially birds, squirrels, and rabbits, are daily left by gunners wounded and half dead in the fields, the difficulty might be settled by supposing these poor disabled creatures the subject of apparent fascination. This is, however, met by some of the preceding objections: sick or not, the animal displays sufficient activity, the moment his fascinating oppressor receives a good thwack on the back.

Others, again, have supposed, with Blumen-

bach, that the curiosity excited by the jingling music of the rattlesnake, and terror, operating to such an extent as to deprive the animal of all power of escape, will explain the whole mystery of fascination. But curiosity, as an operating cause, must be thrown aside; since all charmers are not rattlesnakes; and as for the fear of a peril which can be easily escaped, and is not imminent at first, it is difficult to suppose that it should so completely overpower the physical faculties of any animal whatever. Where the occasion is very sudden, or unusually frightful, it is easy to conceive of such a paroxysm and ecstasy of terror as shall deprive an animal of all corporeal power. Such is the frenzy of horses and cattle in a stable on fire. Pigeons and storks have been known to dart down into the flames of a burning city; and in the same way birds have been brought down from the air by the shouts of a great army. But there can be nothing similar in the terror inspired by a serpent—a spectacle customary enough to all

the little dwellers of the woods and fields. Besides, who can suppose that a British captain in India, who had doubtless hunted his tiger, and shot his wild elephant, should grow chicken-hearted at sight of a *cobra da capello*? or that a full-blooded Yankee, who had slaughtered his *cord* or two of snakes, should ever show the white feather to a single rattler?

The last theory I shall mention is the earliest in date, being recorded by Pliny, and revived by the philosophic Count de Lacépède; both of whom refer the phenomenon of fascination to an intoxicating emanation, which reptiles are supposed to throw out at will, inebriating all animals within its influence. The adventure of the bold Briton, who was charmed before he saw the cobra, is somewhat in favour of this doctrine, which is by no means so absurd in itself as many may be inclined to think. The effluvium of the vanilla intoxicates the labourer who gathers it; the manchineel, the elder, and other narcotic shrubs, produce a baleful effect

on persons sleeping under their shade. That an animal should have the power to exhale a noxious emanation does not seem a whit more extraordinary than the faculty which others possess of dispensing light and electric shocks. Plausible, however, as this ancient theory may seem, it receives a death-blow from some of the cases I have narrated. In the instances of the two boys and the two men, it appears that the snakes were able to charm only one individual at a time; whereas, had an intoxicating effluvia been the means used, both the adventurers must, in each instance, have been fascinated together.

The bright and beautiful lights that seemed to have attended each case of man-charming, and the ravishing music heard by Willard, are phenomena which may perhaps assist some happier theorist in building up a more poetical hypothesis. As for myself, I do not pretend to speculate upon the subject, being content to believe, without attempting to play the philosopher.

The facts of serpent-charming, as I have mentioned, are generally credited by the sages. Some, however, affect not merely to doubt, but even to discard them, as being the coinages, or idle imaginings, of ignorant country-people, whose representations are, of course, to be considered of no account whatever. This is carrying scepticism too far. The country-people, from whom indeed most of the accounts come, are, as no less a man than Burke tells us, "better observers, in such matters, than more civilised and reasoning people, for they rely more upon experience than theories." And, moreover, many of these relations come from men of admitted intelligence and integrity.

Other persons attack the accounts, more sily and adroitly, with objections; two of which, being somewhat striking, and apparently conclusive, it is proper to notice.

The first objection is, that no snake ever exercises a fascinating faculty *in a cage*. This objection, unluckily for the makers, asserts what is not the fact. An early number of the

London Philosophical Transactions contains a perfectly well authenticated account by Dr. Sprengell, of several experiments performed upon female vipers in cages, with mice ; which, being thrown into the cages, were charmed, danced about, squeaked, and ended by running down the vipers' throats.

The other objection is, that, however frequent were the cases *formerly* told and recorded of reptile fascination, none ever occur, none are ever heard of *now*.

To this I beg leave to say, that it is a great mistake—that cases are still of frequent occurrence—that they happen, indeed, every day, and under everybody's nose—and that any one curious on the subject needs but to open his eyes and look about him to see them—cases of fascination by reptiles a hundredfold more strongly endowed with the charming faculty than common serpents, though belonging, as I believe, to the black snake and rattlesnake families, and producing effects proportionably greater and more destructive.

Look—as any one may—at that crawling thing with forked tongue—the blackest of black snakes—that has crept into the bower of the innocent maid, upon whom he has set his serpent glance—into whose ears he has hissed the music of perdition !—Fascinated by a look that seems of love, lulled by a voice that has stolen the tones of tenderness, the innocent maid dreams of joy and happiness, of faith and affection ; while, all the while, the reptile is writhing his folds around her neck, and burying his fangs in her bosom.

And *there* crawls another of the black snake family !—his basilisk look is upon the widow holding her orphan upon her knee, and smiling upon the reptile, in whom her deluded eyes—for he has cast his spell upon her—see only the form of a friend and protector—a friend and protector that will grind her bones and the bones of her little one to powder.

And here is one of the rattlesnake family—a subtle beast, that bears upon his tail a dice-box, with which he jangles such a melody of fasci-

nation, that presently you shall see that bright-eyed youth—a sparrow, or pigeon, from whom he has already plucked every feather—bitten to death, and laid, a gory corse, in a grave of dishonour.

And here rolls another—a fat and swelling monster, golden of hue, and on his tail, for a rattle, a cask of dollars, labelled over with prices-current and maps of town-lots, all glorious to behold and bewitching to hear; and around him a knot of hopeful fools, dazzled by the glittering speculation of his eyes, all pressing forward to be—devoured.

Another yet!—and behold how comely of aspect and amiable of hue, with the crest of a cobra on his head, whereon is written *Philanthropy*, and at his tail a bundle of lucifer matches and tomahawks, wherewith, as he charms the virtuous multitude, he supplies them the means (for he himself harms not) of knocking one another's brains out, and setting a community in flames.

See yet another — a lank, homely, insigni-

ficant-looking creature, yet a reptile more powerful to charm, more strong to destroy, than all who have preceded him. He crawls through the multitude, hissing a song of liberty, a collar round his throat with the name of *Patriot* engraved thereon, and at his tail a cluster of penny-trumpets and popguns, with which he makes a music that sets all to dancing with joy, and to knocking one another upon the head; the while he crawls upon their necks, wreathing them together in hideous chains, and, as he wreathes, sucking away their blood and substance.

Thousands of reptiles such as these, and thousands of others of different hues and species, creep round about us, plying their basilisk arts every hour and every moment, making victims alike of high and low, of old and young, wise and weak, rich and poor; and he who, from some safe covert, will look awhile upon them and their operations, will never afterwards doubt the existence of—the Fascinating Power of Reptiles.

A NIGHT ON THE TERRAPIN ROCKS.

CHAPTER I.

ALL persons who have visited Niagara are aware, that the rocks stretching in a broken chain from Goat Island far out into the Horse-shoe Fall, giving foundation to the bridge by which the visiter reaches the brink of the cataract, are designated as the Terrapin Rocks—a name scarce worthy the dignity of their position, but rendered somewhat appropriate by a resemblance, which fancy readily traces in them, to a cluster of gigantic turtles, sprawling in the

torrent. They lie confusedly along the verge of the watery precipice, extending a distance of a hundred yards or more from the island, of which they seem to have formed originally a part—the ruins of a jutting promontory long since washed away. The bridge—a low path of logs and planks, as is well known—gives access to many of these fragments; others again may be reached, without such assistance, from the island; and the adventurous spirit, tempted by the very wildness of the exploit, will often seek among them some convenient perch, where, poised perhaps over the tremendous gulf, with the flood on either side of him shooting furiously by, he enjoys a spectacle of unequalled magnificence in itself, and to which the feelings inspired by the situation add double sublimity.

The bridge at its termination projects several feet over the fall; and here the visiter may enjoy both the scene and the excitement of a half-fancied peril, without encountering the risk which would certainly attend a scramble among the rocks, by any one not having his nervous

propensities under full command. A fall—the consequence of a single false step—into a current that rather darts than runs, and a whirl down an abyss of a hundred and sixty feet perpendicular depth—are consequences that may easily happen; and the thought of them is in general sufficient to keep visitors on the bridge.

Yet use doth breed a habit in a man. I do not think I possess any philosophic contempt of raging billows, and I have especially very poor and unhappy brains for looking down precipices. Yet there was something in the glory of Niagara that chased away my fears—it may be, swallowed them up in the all-engrossing passion of delight; something in the sublime position of those naked rocks, too, which, when once reached, substituted for trembling apprehension a nobler feeling—a feeling as of enthronement, and rule, and power over the majestic torrent.

One day, while sitting upon one of these grim thrones, speculating, after the true motley man-

ner, upon the ever-falling flood, in which fancy saw represented the river of human life, with the cataract of death, over which it was eternally falling, and wondering what difference it made to the drop pitching down the steep, whether rocks had vexed, or smoother channels lulled it into security, on the way ; my attention was attracted to a stranger, whom I had previously noticed on the bridge, and who, besides myself, was the only living creature at that moment to be seen on or near the fall. He stood grasping the rail of the bridge, pale, agitated, and eyeing myself, as I soon found, with a look that I interpreted into a call for assistance—a call which terror, sickness, or some unknown cause, I supposed, prevented his making by word of mouth.

I left my rock, which was only rendered temporarily accessible in consequence of a huge log having lodged against it, as well as against another nearer the bridge, forming a stepping-tree that the first swell of the flood must wash away, and hurried to the stranger's assistance,

without however having any very clear idea of what ailed him. As I stepped upon the bridge, he seized me by the hand, and with the fervent ejaculation, "Heaven be praised !" hurried me up to his side, pretty much with the air of one who, in mortal affright himself, has just snatched another out of imminent danger. "Heaven be praised !" he cried; "I was frightened for you, or, rather, I—I—." Here he became confused, as if awaking from a dream—"I was frightened for myself !"

All this was very mysterious and incomprehensible to me; which my countenance showing, the gentleman—for indeed he was a man both of good appearance and manners—exclaimed, "I beg your pardon: I believe I have been acting like a fool, and talking like one. But the appearance of a human being sitting on that rock unmanned me: I thought it was *myself*, and—and—. In short, sir, I scarce know what I am saying. You seem amazed at my trepidation. Yet I can tell you of an adventure on that rock, which will excuse my

weakness. Yes—that is, if you will but walk with me to some secure place—to the island; for, I freely admit, my thoughts are *here* too much disordered.”

My curiosity being raised, and somewhat of an interest excited in the stranger, whose years, for he was in the prime of life, his tall and robust frame, and manly countenance, seemed inconsistent with the weakness of fear,—I readily attended him to the island. His agitation decreased as we approached it; and by-and-bye, when he had plunged amid its sweet bowers, walking towards its upper borders, whither he begged me to accompany him, it vanished so entirely, that he was able, like myself, to note and admire the numberless beauties which make almost an elysium of this fairy island.

Was there ever, indeed, a spot so lovely as Goat Island? Couched on the breast of the fall, surrounded by the mighty floods, that go rushing by with the velocity and with ten times the power and fury of the wind—a very hurricane of waters; lashed, beaten, worried,

perpetually devoured by them ; it lies amid the roar and convulsion, its little islets around it green, lovely, and peaceful, an Eden on the face of chaos. Hid in its groves of beech and maple, of larch and hemlock, oak, linden, and tulip tree ; in its peeping glades, embowered with vines and ivies, and towering sumachs that cluster rich and red as Persian roses all around ; the raspberry hanging from the bush, the strawberry and the bluebell glimmering together on the ground ; the bee and the butterfly, the grasshopper and the humming-bird pursuing their pretty tasks all around ; the sparrow and the mocking-bird singing aloft ; the dove cooing, the woodpecker tapping, in the shade ; you might here dream away an anchoritish existence, scarcely conscious of the proximity of the cataract, whose voice comes to your ear, a softened murmur, that seems only the hum of other birds and insects a little further off. A step brings you to its borders, and here you look over a wall of torrent to the world, from which you are yet sundered far enough to

satisfy even the complaining Timon. Here you may muse and moralise over "man, that quintessence of dust," and yet indulge the yearning to be near him, of which no misanthrope can wholly divest himself ; here, in your island, your

Desert inaccessible,
Under the shade of melancholy boughs,

you may rail at the monster, without being exasperated by or entirely banished from his presence.

Following my new friend through the lovely walks of the island, and still keeping on its western borders, we reached a charming nook, where a cluster of several rocky and wooded islets was separated from Goat Island only by a narrow channel, through which, however, the current flowed with great tumult and violence. The trunk of a spruce tree, half submerged by the flood, in which it shook with perpetual tremor, offered a passage to the nearer islet to such as were inclined to avail themselves of it. But that was not I ; I liked not the appearance

of the aguish log, over which, every now and then, the torrent made a complete breach, leaping into the air like a gallant and impatient hunter taking a five-barred gate, and then plunging down again to pursue its impetuous course. Nor was my companion a whit more disposed to the adventure than myself. On the contrary, he gazed upon the foamy bridge with some share of the agitation he had previously displayed. From this, however, he soon recovered, and even laughed at his weakness ; after which, sitting down with me at the roots of an ancient tree, the roaring channel at our feet, he related the incident of adventure, the mere allusion to which had aroused my curiosity. He was, he gave me to understand, a citizen of the West—of Illinois, but born in the Empire State, which he was now revisiting, with no other object than to renew a brief acquaintance with the scenes of his youth. But it is proper he should tell his story in his own words.

CHAPTER II.

“My earliest breath was drawn in the great metropolis ; from which, I thank Heaven, I have escaped to become a freeman of the prairies. The slavery of a city life, not to speak of the more intolerable bondage of trade, I early learned to detest ; and I as early made an effort to throw off my chains, and turn savage. You know what the philosopher—I believe it is Humboldt—says : ‘ It is with the beginning of civilisation as with its decline : man appears to repent of the restraint which he has imposed on himself by entering into society ; and he seeks the solitude, and loves it, because it restores

him to his former freedom.' I was beginning to be civilised—that is, I was beginning to make a fortune, which is one and the same thing—when the impulse seized me, and I turned my face to the west. My first place of sojourn was the banks of this very river, the glorious Niagara, on which, as you perceive, I can scarce look without starting up to run away;—not that I am very deeply galled by the looks of civilisation it now wears—its towns and cities, its shops and taverns, its mills and factories, with which they are, here at the falls, striving to mar Heaven's handiwork ; but because every look recalls to memory a terrible adventure that once befel me upon it, and which has converted my once ardent love of the majestic tide into fear and abhorrence.

“I was already becoming weary of the increase of population around me, but not yet able to tear myself from scenes so lovely and beloved, when the projectors of a very pardonable innovation succeeded in throwing a bridge over to Goat Island, and thus opened to the eye

of man haunts that were only before accessible through means the most difficult and dangerous. These little islets before us, and, I believe, several others on the east side, were brought under subjection in the same manner; and the project of throwing a bridge over the Terrapin Rocks was also talked of; though that was left to be completed at a later period. The Terrapin Rocks still lay amid the curling billows, on the verge of the fall, as they had lain for a thousand years, untouched and unapproached by the foot of man. Often have I—among the first to ramble up and down the island, admiring its virgin solitudes, its beauties yet uninvaded and undefiled—sat upon yonder bluff, viewing those blackened rocks, and longing for the commencement and completion of the projected bridge, that I might be upon them. That very rock upon which you sat, I had fixed upon, in prospect, as the seat from which I should survey the flood, making a pleasure of fear, and enjoying the luxury of danger. It is true, that rock appeared entirely isolated

from the others; but that, with its exposed situation on the very edge of the precipice, formed its charm. I saw or fancied that I might reach it by the same means accident provided for you—by lodging a log against it. I was thus, in intention, guilty of the act which I am now wise enough to pronounce midsummer madness in another.”

I made the narrator a bow; he smiled, and continued his story:—

“Meanwhile, that I might not neglect pleasures within my reach, while longing for those as yet unattainable, I did not fail to pursue the pastime of fishing, of which I was then extremely enamoured. Moored in my little skiff along the lonely shores of Grand Island, listing the ripple of the current and the thunder of the distant falls, I enjoyed a sense of liberty, hooked my nibbling white-fish, compared them to human beings, my fellows, all as eager to nibble at the baits of fortune, and thus played the moralist and tyrant together.

“One sunny evening while thus engaged, and

with but little luck, the quiet of the hour and the scene, added to the charms of my philosophy, prevailed over me, and I fell fast asleep in my boat; and so remained for half an hour, dreaming, good easy man that I was hauling up white-fish with men's faces, and other piscatory monsters, all in great numbers, and with the ease and rapidity a fisherman loves.

“On a sudden I awoke. The screams of my victims — for methought they opened their mouths and cried for mercy — had disturbed my conscience, and startled me out of my slumber.

“It was sunset: the shadows of the Canadian hills were stealing over the river, and the dusky twilight was gathering fast. For a few moments my thoughts were in the confusion of slumber but half dispelled. The screams of my visionary captives still sounded in my ears, or, at least, I thought they did, until gradually made aware that the cries I now heard were those of human beings, whom I saw running wildly along the Canada shore, tossing their

arms, and betraying other signs of the greatest agitation. I felt a drowsy surprise at the spectacle, and for a moment half wondered what had become of the island cove, with its hanging trees and jutting rocks, in which I had moored my boat ; and what was the meaning of those dimmer and more distant shores that seemed gliding past me like the phantasms of a dream. Nay, I even wondered what caused the commotion of the people on shore—at what they were beckoning and screaming.

“ A louder yell from them broke the last remaining bonds of sleep ; and I started up in my skiff, restored for the first time to full consciousness. My boat had broke her moorings, and God of heaven ! I was in the rapids !

“ Yes, in that fatal slumber—fatal, yet tranquil as the sleep of happiness—I had been floating down the tide, hearing, in my dreams, the shrieks of warning sent to me from the shore, yet hearing them all in vain, until it was too late to profit by them. I was in the rapids, plunging down the watery declivity ‘towards

the horrible gulf, from which nothing but the wings of an eagle could save me. O the agony of that discovery—the sting of that moment of horror!

“ But was there no escape? I was but a hundred yards from the shore, and my oars were swinging loose on their pivots. I seized them with the energy of despair; but a fierce blast burst from the shore, and whirled me still further into the current. Away, away—down, down—in spite of my exertions, which were as the struggles of an insect in a tornado; faster and faster, wilder and wilder—nothing helped, nothing availed, save to add double bitterness to my cup of misery. The rapids grew fiercer and rougher, and on a sudden the oars were shattered to pieces in my hands. I started up with the mad thought of flinging myself into the tide and swimming for my life; but I was now midway in the channel, and the fury of the galloping billows all around me palsied heart and limb: there was no hope, there was no escape—the falls had secured their victim.

“ I sat down, and covered my eyes with my hands; but it was only for an instant. I could not thus die tamely, like a fettered brute.

“ I rose again, frantic—fiercely mad—determined to leap into the water, and die at least struggling. My boat was already among the breakers on the reef running from the head of the island. Look! you may see them through the spruces: how they leap up, striding and curling over the hidden rocks, pillars and arches of foam, beautiful yet dreadful to behold!

“ Among these horrible billows my boat darted like an arrow, struck a rock, and was shivered to atoms. As for me, tossed twenty feet into the air by the shock, I had just enough of consciousness to exult in the thought that death was snatching me from suffering. In one moment more I was swimming in the torrent, grasping at rocks over which I was borne with rending violence, and from which I was torn before my fingers could clutch them.

A few months before, in constructing the bridge to the island, a man had fallen into the flood, and saved himself by clinging to a rock. I had heard of the expedient by which he was enabled to catch hold of the rock, and now sought to imitate it. Instead of striking out towards the island, as I had been endeavouring to do, though, miserable me ! with no hope of reaching it, I turned my face *up* the flood, and strained every nerve to moderate the velocity of my flight through the current. The expedient succeeded. My body came in contact with a rock, which I was able to grasp in my hands, and retain hold of for a moment.

“ It was only for a moment : my body formed an obstruction over which the waters leaped and foamed as over a new rock ; and away they at last whirled me, drowning and helpless, still struggling, but struggling, as I well knew, wholly in vain.

“ Away again down the ridgy steep I went swimming and rolling, now whelmed, now upon the surface, stealing a ghastly look of the sky

that was to be dark to me for ever, bruised, wounded, strangling, and stunned by the thunder of the cataract over which I was hastening to fall.

“That thunder grew every instant louder and more appalling; I could already see the hideous rim of the cataract—the sudden sinking of the flood, known by its border of foam, mingled with the yellow light transmitted through the edge of the down-curling water. This I saw with what I deemed my last look; but that look disclosed to me a black cluster of rocks among or very near to which I was evidently hurrying. A prayer came to my lips; I screamed it to Heaven, and, with efforts of strength that were rather convulsions than natural struggles, struck out towards them, hoping that the torrent might dash me among them. The torrent did dash me among them; but it was not until the very last of them had been reached that I found myself able to grasp it, to maintain my hold, and to crawl from the

accursed flood. I was saved! I lay secure upon the rock—that very rock which I had so often longed to visit—a prisoner in the midst and upon the verge of the cataract.

CHAPTER III.

“I LAY upon the rock exhausted and fainting, and, for a time, almost insensible; but by-and-bye I recovered strength and looked around me. How horrible was the prospect! Night was closing around me; and there I crouched upon my rock—so small as scarcely to permit me to lie at length—on one side of it the abyss, on all the others the roaring waters. My hair bristled as I peeped down the chasm; my heart withered when I looked upon the expanse of torrent hemming me in, the tumbling billows that menaced me as they approached, and mocked me as they rushed by and leaped down the precipice.

“ It was almost night, but objects were still faintly discernible on the shore. I saw human figures moving on Table Rock. Were they the men who had seen me in the rapids, hailed me, waked me from my fatal sleep, and followed after me, running along the banks, to—no, not to *help* me!—man could not do that—but to witness my fate? I rose upon my feet, and shouted at the wildest stretch of my voice. It was breath wasted—the twittering of a sparrow in a tempest, the cry of a drowning mariner in the midst of an ocean: the sound was scarcely audible to myself. They heard me not—they saw me not: the night was darkening upon them, and they stole away from the falls. What difference made it to me, whom, had they seen me, they could have only pitied? Yet I wept when I saw them no more. There was something of support, something of comfort, even in the sight of a human being, though afar off, and incapable of rendering me any assistance.

“ By-and-bye it was wholly night; but a full moon was stealing up the sky, throwing first

a yellow ghastly lustre, and then, as she mounted higher, a silver glory over the scene. A party of visitors came down upon the Table Rock to view the falls by moonlight: I could see the fluttering of white scarfs and dresses—there were women among them—women, the soft-hearted, the humane, the pitying. I rose again; I waved my arms; I shouted. They look!—It is upon the waters, among which I am—nothing, a straw, a mote, a speck, invisible and unregarded, They looked, and they departed; and I was again in solitude—as lonely, as friendless, as hopeless, as if the sole dweller of the sphere.

“ Presently, as the night lapsed on, clouds gathered over the sky, and the moon was occasionally hidden, now and then to dart down a snowy beam through the driving rack, giving a wild and spectral character to the scene, which was before sufficiently awful. There were even indications of a storm: pale sheets of lightning ever and anon whitened along the sky, and perhaps the thunder rolled; but that I heard not

—the thunders of the cataract swallowed up the detonations of heaven. A breeze—there was ever a breeze there, the gusts from the vexed gulf below ; but this was a wind that prevailed over the gusts of the fall—came down from the lake, and grew each moment in strength. I almost expected the hour when, growing into fury, it should whirl me from my miserable rock, and plunge me down the falls. My next thought was quite as terrible : this breeze blowing from the lake, must it not increase the volume of waters flowing down the river ? Ay, and by-and-bye, of all these rocks, now breasting and repelling the flood, there will not be one that is not covered a foot deep, a mighty billow foaming over it ! What then becomes of me, denied secure possession even of my wretched rock ?

“ As I thought these things, deeming my misery greater than I could bear, greater than that wherewith Heaven had afflicted any other mortal, a shriek echoed in my ear ; and looking round, I beheld a boat in the rapids not fifty

yards off, and within but as many feet of the fall, and in it a man, who seemed like myself to have been asleep, and was but now awakened to a consciousness of his situation. He shrieked, started up, uttered one more cry, and then vanished over the fall.

“ This dreary spectacle appeased my clamours; it left me stupified, yet clinging with convulsive grasp to the rock, on which I felt I had yet a brief term of existence.

“ The moon continued to rise, the clouds to darken, the lightnings to grow brighter; and, after a time, the storm I had apprehended, burst over me: the artillery of heaven was, at last, heard pealing and crashing, and adding its elemental music to the boom of the waters. But before the storm burst, how many new incidents were added to that midnight adventure! Other things of life—things to which life was as dear as to me, yet all more wretched than I—passed over the falls within my sight. An eagle, blown by the tempest from his perch—or, perhaps, maimed by a gunner, and thus

precipitated into the river—was whirled over, almost within reach of my hand, fluttering in vain the sinewy wings that had once borne him among the stars. Then came an ox, and a bear ;—a horse, whose scream was to the heart as sickening as death ; and a dog, who, as he passed, yelped—yes, even from the brink of the fall, yelped to me for succour. To *me* !—to me who was myself so hopeless and lost ! I laughed a bitter laugh of derision and despair.

“ By-and-bye a log was whirled down the rapid, and among the rocks. It lodged against the rock nearest my own—that which I would have given worlds but to reach—and the free end, swinging in the current, struck against my little island, and ground its way by. Was not this a bridge offered me by Heaven, which had at last heard my supplications ? Frantic with excitement, with mingled hope and fear, I snatched at the log, to drag it athwart my rock, hoping the very violence of the current would keep it securely lodged betwixt the two. I might as well have

attempted to arrest a thunderbolt in its flight. I seized it indeed, but its momentum was irresistible; and with a tremendous jerk it both freed itself from my grasp and dashed me from my rock over the fall—yes, over the fall; but, God be praised, my hands were able to clutch upon the rock, from which I hung suspended betwixt the heaven above and the hell beneath, swinging in the gusts and in the waters, which, on either side, washed my feet, falling upon them as with the weight of mountains.

“What was all I had suffered before, compared with the agonies of that moment, thus hanging, and every moment about to fall? I endeavoured to plant my feet on the broken face of the rock, and in this way clamber again to its top: there were crannies and ridges enough, but rotted by the water and frost, and they broke under my feet. My efforts only served the purpose of digging away the foundations of the rock, and thus expediting the moment of my fall. I threw all my strength into my arms, and with a prodigious effort

succeeded—yes, succeeded in again placing myself upon the rock, where I lay down upon my face and laughed with joy.

“Then came the tempest, the rushing wind, the roaring thunder, the blinding lightning. What horrible loveliness now sat upon the scene! Was not this *more* than sublime, more than terrific? Now the descending waters were veiled in impenetrable darkness, in a blackness as of death and chaos; and anon the red bolt, the levin-rocket bursting from the cloud, glared into the darkest nooks of the abyss, revealing and adorning them with a ghastly splendour. Add to this the thunder rattling in rivalry with the roaring flood; and you have Niagara, seen at midnight, by the torches of heaven—fit lights for a spectacle so grand and stupendous.

“It was a spectacle too magnificent to be lost by the visitors of Niagara, who came trooping down to the Table Rock, where, at every blaze of the lightning, I could see them clustered, expressing by their gestures their admiration and delight. I saw them so distinctly at.

times, that I thought it not impossible they also might see me ; and accordingly I rose again to my feet, forgetting or defying the winds, and doing everything in my power to attract their attention.

“I succeeded ; some one at last beheld me : I knew it by the agitation immediately visible among the crowd, all eyes being now turned in one direction—to the rock on which I stood—I, the lost and the wretched ! The tears rushed to my eyes : I did not expect them to help me—I knew they could not ; but they pitied me ; I should have, at least, some sympathising fellow creature to see me die.

“The agitation increased ; lights were brought, and flashed to and fro ; I saw torches upon the path leading down to the ferry—torches even upon the water. What ! they were crossing the river ? The people of my own side would then know of my fate ; and they—yes, *they* might assist me ! They could reach Goat Island—they would come out upon the rocks—they could throw bridges over

those rocks that were otherwise inaccessible !
My heart leaped in my bosom : I should yet be saved !

“ I looked to Goat Island, yet looked long in vain. Was I deceived ? Alas ! that agitation, those lights descending the rocks and crossing the river, were there not a hundred causes to explain them, without reference to me ? My hopes sank, and I with them to my rock—Heaven and earth ! the water was already rising upon it ! Yes, the river was swelling, swelling fast, and my treacherous rock was vanishing under my feet !

CHAPTER IV.

“AT that moment a light gleamed from Goat Island, and I heard—was it fancy?—a halloo. Another light shone, followed by another and another; and the flash of lightning disclosed a dozen men upon the bank. The same bright glare exhibited me also to them, and they set up a great shout that was no longer to be mistaken for a noise made by the winds or waters: it came distinctly to my ears; and I saw my friends run down the bank towards the rocks, waving their torches and their hands, as if to bid me be of good cheer.

“My transports were inexpressible as I beheld them, some picking their way from rock

to rock, advancing as near to me as they could, while others seemed to remain on the island, only to prepare the means for securing a still nearer approach. They were gathering logs to make bridges—knotting ropes together to float or throw to me—nay, I knew not what they were doing; but I knew they were doing every thing they could, toiling every man with generous zeal; and all of them, when the lightning discovered me standing with outstretched hands, bursting into shouts meant to encourage and animate my spirits.

“But the good work proceeded slowly; they advanced but a little way on the rocks, when the boiling currents brought them to a pause. A log was brought, and one step further secured—and then another pause. I saw there was doubt, and wavering, and confusion among them, and I cried aloud to them not to desert me. Another log was brought and thrown over the chasm that arrested them: it bent, shook, and was half whelmed in the torrent, and they—yes, it was plain to me—they feared

to tread it ! One man, at last, a noble creature, stirred by the piercing cries which I now uttered, dreading lest they should give over their exertions in despair, attempted the passage of the log—reached its middle, staggered—and then fell into the flood. A dismal shriek burst from his companions.—But he was not lost ! A rope had been previously fastened around his body ; and with this they snatched him from the death he had so intrepidly dared for me.

“ This perilous adventure seemed to strike them all with dread. The confusion and wavering among them became still more manifest : some crept back to the island ; others pointed to the river rolling down increased and still growing floods ; and others again looked up to the clouds, which were blacker and fiercer than ever. They uttered no more shouts, they offered no longer encouraging gestures. It was plain they were abandoning me to my fate, or resolved to wait for further assistance ; when every moment of delay was to me full of dan-

ger The floods were already high upon my rock, and still rising. Another hour, a half hour—perhaps but a few moments—and assistance must come to me too late. They knew this; yet they were leaving me—yes, it was plain they were leaving me!

“ I grew frantic at the thought; and, ungrateful for what they had already done, invoked curses upon them for failing in what they could not do.

“ Did my execrations reach their ears? As they turned to depart, a single figure detached itself from the group, ran across the log which had so nearly caused the death of the former adventurer, and then, with such tremendous leaps as I never thought mortal man could make, and with a courage that seemed to laugh all perils to scorn, sprang from rock to rock, and at last stood at my side!—Will you not fancy despair had driven me mad, and that what I now saw and heard was the dream of a mind overcome by sudden insanity? I saw then—no man—but an infernal fiend standing

at my side, who said to me,—‘ Be thou my servant, and I will set thee upon dry land.’ And as he spoke, I felt my rock trembling and sinking under my feet. What will not a man not do for life? ‘ I will be thy servant,’ I cried. With that he laughed the laugh of a devil in my face, and struck the rock with his foot; and down I sank to perdition. He struck the rock with his foot; or was it a thunderbolt that smote it, crushing it away like an arch of sand? It melted from beneath me, and down I sank—down, down into the abyss; and the waters fell upon me like a mountain, crushing, drowning, suffocating; and I—and I—” The narrator paused a moment, wiped the sweat-drops from his forehead, and then laying his hand upon a mossy bank beside him, continued —“ I found myself lying on this identical bank, a fragment of my boat beside me, the rest of it emerging from the water below that log,” (pointing to the little bridge to the islet) “ against which it had struck and been broken, and hurrying off to the cataract at the rate of sixty miles an hour!”

I looked at the stranger in astonishment, perhaps also with indignation; for his story had taken deep hold on my feelings: but I saw in him nothing to justify a suspicion that he was amusing himself at my expense. On the contrary, his appearance indicated deep earnestness and deep emotion; and he was manifestly struggling to shake off the effects of a harrowing recollection. But the affair was a mystery I desired to penetrate; and I exclaimed, somewhat hastily, and, indeed, with no little simplicity—

“And so, sir, “I am to understand you were not upon that rock at all?”

“Certainly,” he replied; “I never was on that rock in my life, and, please Heaven, I never shall be. But, sir,” and here he summoned a faint smile, and again wiped his brows—“you do not, I believe, entirely conceive me. I tell you what was partly an adventure, and partly a dream. It is true that I fell asleep in my boat—that my boat broke her moorings and drifted into the rapids; and it is also true that,

while thus drifting towards destruction, I *dreamed* all I have told you—the cries from the shore—the toss from the boat, and the swim to the rock—the appearance of the people upon Table Rock and Goat Island, the demon and all that—I dreamed this while thus floating. But in reality, while I was thus pleasantly engaged, my boat drifted into the channel here before us, and struck that bridge-log with a violence which both dispersed my dream and saved my life, by hurling me ashore.

“This is my whole story. You are surprised, perhaps, that I made so much ado of my dream, and so little of the real adventure. But in truth, sir, I know nothing of the real adventure, except that I fell asleep in my boat, and was thrown ashore on Goat Island—remember, I was asleep all the time. The dream is, to me, the real adventure, after all; for it had, and still has, upon my mind, all the force of reality. You observe that I look upon this foaming channel before us—upon that log, which if I had gone over or under,

I must have perished, with little or no emotion ; while, on the contrary, the sight of the rock, the scene of imaginary perils and sufferings, affects me in the strongest manner. Truly the dream, the dream's the thing, that, with me, constitutes the soul of the adventure ; and I tell you it, not so much to surprise you with its singularity, as to add one illustration to the many you have yourself perhaps gathered, of the power of the imagination in striking into the heart impressions deeper and more abiding than have been imprinted by the touch of reality. One may understand the incurable hallucinations of madness, who will remember the influence of a dream."

I thanked the gentleman for his story and explanation, and, after some hesitation, begged to know what construction he put upon his compact with the juggling fiend.

" Why, hang him, as he did not comply with his engagement to place me on dry land, (as was natural enough for a devil,) I consider

the contract as broken, and my bond of servitude cancelled," the stranger replied, laughing; but added, a little more seriously—"I lay lay the thing to heart notwithstanding. A man may be shown, even in a dream, the true infirmity of his character—the flimsiness of his virtue, the weakness of his courage. In the daylight we are all actors—actors even to ourselves; it is only in sleep we can remove the mask, and look upon ourselves as Heaven made us.

"But *morbleu!* the tavern-bell rings. Let us leave cold water and philosophy, and go to dinner."

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PETER PILGRIM.

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AUTHOR OF "NICK OF THE WOODS," &c.

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PETER PILGRIM.

THE MAMMOTH CAVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE WONDERS OF THE CAVE WORLD:—ELDON HOLE—
PIT OF FREDERICKSHALL—GROT OF ST. MICHAEL—CAVE
OF SAMARANG—BED OF THE RIO DEL NORTE—TIPPE-
RARY CAVE—CAVE OF THE GUACHARO—FLAMING CAVES
OF CUMANACOA—SUNSHINE CAVE—CAVERN IN DAU-
PHINY—DEVIL'S WIGWAM—CAVE OF THE PETRIFIED
MEN IN TENNESSEE.

CAVES—the world of rock-ribbed darkness
under our feet—have always formed a sub-
ject on which my imagination delighted to
dwell; and to this day, the name seldom
falls upon my ears without conjuring up a

thousand grimly captivating associations — thoughts of the wild and supernatural, the strange and terrific—which are the more enticing for being so unlike the usual phantasms of a day-dream existence. To my boyish conceits, Epimenides gathering wisdom in a brown study of fifty years in the cavern of Crete, was a much wiser personage than the other seven sages of Greece, who merely hunted for truth at the bottom of a well; while Bassus, the Carthaginian, digging, with a Roman army, for the lost treasure-cave of Queen Dido,* was a greater hero than the

* V. *Tacit.* l. xvi. c. 1, et seq.—This wonderful cavern, which, according to the representations of Bassus, made to the emperor Nero, was upon his own estate, near Carthage, he declared “contained immense stores of gold not wrought into the form of coin, but in rude and shapeless ingots, such as were in use in the early ages of the world. In one part of the cave were to be seen massy heaps, and in other places columns of gold towering to a prodigious height; the whole an immense treasure, reserved in obscurity to add to the splendour of Nero’s reign.”

The effect of this crackbrained schemer’s representations was not confined to the Emperor, who despatched him to

mightiest Julius wading in blood at Pharsalia. For the same reason, if the truth must be told, I even held that the dark Hades—the *inamabile regnum*, as Tisiphone so emphatically called it—the domain of Pluto, which, as everybody knows, was only to be reached through the dismal antres of Cumæ and Tænarus, was a decidedly more interesting habitation for curious spirits than even the sun-lit and privileged tops of Olympus. The Troglodytes were my *beau idéal* of a sensible and happy nation.

Some tincture of my own peculiar propensity, however, I think, may be traced in the mind of the world at large. It is certain there are few subjects on which men have given, and still continue to give, a greater

Africa in state to fetch the buried treasure, but was felt by the whole Roman people. “No other subject,” says Tacitus, “was talked of;” and during the quinquennial games, it was “the theme on which the orators expatiated, and the poets exhausted their invention.” It was the “Mississippi Scheme” of the day.

loose to their imaginations than that of caves. The time has indeed gone by when they believed that devils and condemned souls had their appointed place within the hollows of the earth, accessible, even to mortal foot, through each cavern, each *alta spelunca* that yawned on its surface ; the Pythium no longer breathes its oraculous vapour ; the cave of Trophonius whispers no more the secrets of fate ; and even the modern hags of the broomstick, that once

“ Plied in caves, th’ unutterable trade,”

and the fairy Gnomes that

“ Dug the mine and wrought the ore,”

are no longer expected to be found quiring around the infernal caldron, or dancing amid their heaps of gleaming treasure. But if Truth — the murderess of Fancy — has been at work on the classic mythos and the Gothic fable, she has still left us enough to wonder at in the world below ; she has robbed it of the supernatural, but not of the marvellous.

The *Mundus Subterraneus* of old father Kircher, however exploded in most of its particulars among scientific men, contains nothing too incredible for the mass of mankind. Fortunately, as it happens, for the good old Jesuit's sake, as well as that of mankind, there are, as far as mere caves are concerned, so many wonders already established as undoubted facts, that a man may be pardoned for believing almost anything.

Let us glance at some of these authenticated marvels. They will form a proper introduction to the subject of the present description — the limestone Pandemonium, with which I desire to make the reader acquainted. A *propylon* of wonders becomes the Mammoth Cave, and should lead the way up to its gaping door, as rows of sphinxes conduct the traveller to the front of an Egyptian temple.

The famous Eldon Hole of Derbyshire (who has not heard of the Eldon Hole?) has been sounded with a plummet-line of nearly

ten thousand feet in length—that is, within but a little of two miles—without reaching the bottom ; and the Pit of Frederickshall, in Norway, it is inferred from the number of seconds a stone consumes in reaching the bottom, must be more than two miles in depth.

Whether the sound of a falling stone, reverberating through a tube even smoother than we can fancy the pit of Frederickshall to be, could be actually heard at the depth of eleven thousand feet, I leave to be conjectured ; but I may aver, in reference to the Eldon Hole, which was really sounded by a line to the depth mentioned, that if the doctrine of internal fire, resuscitated by modern Vulcanists, be true, and the scale of increasing temperatures adopted by them be just, there ought to ascend from this same convenient flue heat enough to warm all Derbyshire. The internal heat of the earth is said by philosophers to increase one degree Fahrenheit, for every hundred feet of descent. If the mouth of

Eldon Hole were on a level with the general surface of the earth, the bottom ought to be at a temperature of one hundred degrees above the mean temperature (say fifty) at the surface.

Two miles under ground ! With these facts in view, who shall quarrel with his neighbour for believing, as many a man does, that he has eaten his dinner in the Mammoth Cave, under the bed of Green River ? or with the monkeys of Gibraltar for having made their way from Africa to Europe, as every body knows they must have done, *via* the Grot of St. Michael, under the foundations of the Mediterranean ?

The extent of caves is a subject upon which men are still more inclined to be glorious. But here we have facts enough on record to countenance any stretch of magniloquence ; besides opinions, which, as the world goes, have in general, with mankind, all the weight and consequence of facts. Thus, the people of Java are of opinion that the sacred cave of

Samarang affords a sub-marine passage from their island to Canton, in China—a distance of somewhat more than two thousand miles, traced in a line as straight as could be winged by an albatross. But leaving opinions, let us refer to a fact of philosophic celebrity, which, besides being quite a settler of all difficulties, possesses some peculiar features of interest. In the year 1752, the Rio del Norte, one of the greatest rivers of America, (its length is reckoned at full two thousand miles,) suddenly sank into the earth, leaving its bed dry for a space of fifty leagues; and in this condition it remained several weeks, the waters flowing into some subterranean abyss, which it required them so long a time to fill. Allowing the river at the Paso del Norte, where the incident occurred, to be but a quarter of a mile wide, and its depth but five feet, with a current of two miles the hour, and supposing it continued to sink into the earth during two weeks, we can give a pretty shrewd guess at the extent

and capacity of the cavern in which it was swallowed up. According to my calculations, to dispose of such a body of water, would have demanded a cave one hundred feet wide and high, and just five hundred miles long ! Nor must this statement, however lightly made, be considered absurd. Let it be remembered that the channel of the river for a space of fifty leagues, was absolutely robbed of its waters. Supposing their disappearance had been only momentary, it is easy to perceive, the abyss that received them must have been more vast than we can readily figure to our imaginations.

After this, no one need doubt the veracity of those travellers who relate their moderate rambles of “ twenty miles or thereabouts ” in the great caves of the west. No one need even be astounded at the grandeur of that renowned cave of Tipperary, discovered in 1833, with its chambers — “ wider than angels ken ” — one “ nearly a mile in circumference,” another of about three miles in circumference ” — so paddy-

whackishly described by an enthusiastic correspondent of the Tipperary Free Press ; though, sorry we are to confess, in the hands of a malicious surveyor, the hall of a mile in circumference is said to have suddenly shrunk into a room of ninety feet by one hundred and fifty, and that of three miles into one of one hundred feet by just two hundred and fifty. This is a climax somewhat similar to that of the story of the seventy cats—"our cat and another one !" But what if it be ? There is

" Something yet left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon."

The wonders of the cave world are not yet exhausted.

Let us accompany Humboldt, the profoundest of chorographers, the most veracious of travellers, to the Cave of the Guacharo, among the mountains of Cumana, in South America.

This cave opens on the face of a precipice, a grand abyss seventy-seven feet high and

eighty-five wide. A river, born of darkness and night, like many of the streams of Carniola, rolls from its mouth; while festoons of creeping plants, the ivies of the tropics, hanging from the rocks above, and glittering with flowers of every gorgeous dye, swing across the chasm like so many boa-constrictors on the watch for prey. A grove of palms and ceibas, the tropical cotton-wood, rises tall and verdant at the very entrance, with birds singing, and monkeys chattering, among the boughs. Through this grove you enter the cave; and in this grove you continue, even when the world of sunshine has been left some distance behind. The palms still lift their majestic tops, and the ceibas rub their green heads against the rocky roof; whilst flowers, (the heliconia, the dragon-root, and others,) bloom under your feet. The palms and ceibas at last cease to appear; but not so the flowers. As far as man has penetrated—a distance of more than a quarter of a mile

—you still see them growing, and all in darkness ; on the hill of the cascade, (for a hill there is, and a cascade too,) and beyond, you find them flourishing among pillars of stalactite, as pale, as sepulchral, as fantastic, yet as beautiful, as the growth of spar around them. One might here dream of the grove of Aladdin, with its trees bearing fruits of diamond and ruby, of sapphire and emerald ; and the more especially as every rub of your iron lamp against a spar calls up before your affrighted eyes a thousand horrible genii—not the mighty sons of Eblis indeed, but black and dismal guacharos, birds bigger than our northern screech-owls, that with fluttering wing and thrilling shriek repel the invader of their enchanted abode. Compared with such a subterraneous elysium, the garden discovered by Don Quixote, in his memorable exploration of the cave of Montesinos, *el mas bello, ameno y deleitoso que puede criar la naturaleza* (the most beautiful and delightful

that nature ever made), is but a kitchen garden.

But what is even the cave of the Guacharo to the Flaming Caves of Cumanacoa—two wonders of nature hidden among the same mountains? In the face of a tremendous precipice looking over the savage woods that skirt the mountain below, are two immense holes, visible at a great distance, even in the day-time. But it is at night that they are seen to the best advantage; and then, if his star be propitious, if the Indian Cyclopes in the bowels of the Cerro start from their slumbers to renew their oft interrupted toil at forge and bellows, the traveller, leaping from his own uneasy couch, beholds with amazement the mouths of the caverns lighted up with flames; he sees, high on the sable cliff, two mighty disks of fire that glare upon him from afar, like the eyes of some crouching monster—a tiger-cat as big as a Cordillera, or those more portentous orbs that might have

blazed under the brows of the arch enemy,
when he

“ Dilated stood
Like Teneriffe or Atlas,”

the Quinbus Flestryn of demons. The Indians and Creoles that take to their heels at the first shriek of the guacharos, could be scarcely expected to brave the terrors of the Flaming Caves. The thick forests at the base of the cliffs are, besides, the haunts of innumerable jaguars — creatures that think little of shouldering a bullock in the midst of the herd, and tramping victoriously off, and would of course think still less of swallowing a herdsman who should come in their way. Hence, as it happens, mortal man has not yet disturbed the solitude, or explored the wonders of the Flaming Caves, which he is content to admire at the distance that lends safety, as well as enchantment, to the view.

Of an equally, perhaps of a still more wonderful character, is another cave of South

America, (in Peru or Bolivia, I think,) of which I once read, though I cannot now tell where to lay my hands on it, that gapes on a mountain side, as black and gloomy as cave may be, until the close of the day; when, the shades of the mountain having fallen over it, and over every thing else in the neighbourhood, on a sudden, warm sunshine gushes from its jaws, lights up the objects around, smiles, trembles, fades, and then expires. This must be the entrance to the Elysium of the American races — the Happy Hunting Grounds, which all the tribes, savage and civilized together, believe the Master of Life has prepared for the souls of the brave and just. But, unfortunately, no Humboldt has yet visited the spot, and we know no more of it than I have mentioned. Within its unknown chambers we should perhaps find such Hesperian Gardens and Elysian Fields as must leave even the cave of the Guacharo in the shade — crystal wildernesses, overgrown

with phosphorescent cryptogamia — those luminous plants, which, in the coal-mines of Dresden, and some other places, hanging in festoons from the roof and pillars, and stretching in tapestry along the walls, diffuse a glorious lustre on all around; until the visiter, amazed and delighted, fancies himself in the palace of the Fairy Queen, or a cavern dug out of moonlight. The South American cave, to whatever cause it may owe its resplendent emanation, is, undoubtedly, a great wonder; but the rocks of the Nile and the Orinoco exhale music — why should not others breathe sunshine?

According to old Mezeray (or rather, according to some of those philosophers who quote him, for I myself could never light upon the page that records the marvel,) there is a cavern in Dauphiny, near Grenoble, famous as the seat of a subterraneous Erie and Niagara, famous also for the exploring voyage performed in it in his youth by Francis the

First, in royal person. At a considerable distance from the entrance was a sheet of water of unknown bounds, which had previously arrested the steps of all visitants. But what shall restrain the curiosity of a king? A barge was constructed, illuminated with hundreds of flambeaux, and launched into the flood; into which the gallant Francis, attended by a party of his bravest courtiers, struck boldly out, the Columbus of the caverned deep—taking good care, however, to leave a huge beacon-fire blazing behind him on the rocky beach, to secure his safe return. A voyage of three miles (cave-distance, be it recollected,) conducted the royal adventurer to the opposite shores of the ocean; whence having landed, and, I suppose, taken possession in the usual style of discoverers, he turned his prow in another direction, determined to fathom all the mysteries of the lake. By and by, an experienced boatman declared the barge was no longer floating on a stagnant lake, but in

a current that was perceptibly increasing in strength; and a courtier called the attention of the monarch to a hollow noise heard in the distance, which, like the current, was every moment growing stronger—nay, even swelling into horrific thunder. The navigators rested on their oars, while a plank, to which several flaming torches were tied, was committed to the water. It floated rapidly away, became agitated, tossed up and down, and finally pitched down the unknown cataract to which the rival of Charles the Fifth was so ignorantly hastening. “Back oars!” was then the cry; and all rowing for their lives, the monarch had the good fortune to regain his beacon and the upper air, with which, it appears, he remained content for the rest of his life.

A singular story was formerly told of a cave in Upper Canada, in the ridge that bounds the western shore of Ontario, from

which it was but seven or eight miles removed. It bore the awe-inspiring title of the Devil's Wigwam, (*Manito Wigwam*), so called by the Indians, who seemed very devoutly to believe that the father of lies had there established his head-quarters. Had they put him in the Irish cave, previously described, the residence would have been more appropriate. The Manito Wigwam was reported to be of vast depth, consisting of several terraces separated one from another by precipices of more than a hundred feet perpendicular pitch, the last terminating in a fathomless gulf, into which no human being had ever endeavoured to penetrate. From this cavern, once a week, issued a terrific din, an earthquake-like explosion, of such force as to shake the hills for five leagues around. The Manito Wigwam was therefore a very wonderful cave. I say *was*, for I know not whether it is now in existence. The same enterprising spirit which has converted Niagara

into a mill-pond, might as easily have modified the Devil's Wigwam into a hole for storing winter potatoes.

To this catalogue of wonderful caverns, which I might easily swell to greater length, it would be unpardonable not to add a notice of the marvellous one discovered a year or two since by two scientific gentlemen of Philadelphia, in one of the mountain counties of East Tennessee; in which they lighted upon the petrified bodies of two men and a dog, of races manifestly older by many thousand years than the men and dogs of the present day. Those venerable remains it was said to be the intention of the discoverers to remove from their rocky dwelling to the more appropriate shelves of a museum, to take their places among mummied moderns of the time of Pharaoh, and divide with Javanese dragons and mermaids the admiration of a discerning public. It does not, however, appear that these petrified an-

cients have yet left their cavern, not so much as a finger having been received in any museum in the land ; a circumstance that can only be accounted for by the ingenious and veracious editor, to whom the public owes the first notice of the discovery.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAMMOTH CAVE : ITS EXTENT—CAVES OF KENTUCKY—
THE BARRENS—BULL, THE DOG—CAVE-HOLLOW—MOUTH
OF THE MAMMOTH CAVE.

AMONG so many wonders and prodigies, the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, it may be supposed, must sink into insignificance. It reveals no subterranean gardens, no Stygian lakes, no stupendous waterfalls ; it discharges no volcanic flames, it emits no phosphoric sunlight ; it contains no petrified pre-Adamites, and no hollow thunders are heard resounding among its dreary halls. It is not two miles deep ; it is not five hundred miles long—nay, it can no longer boast even the twenty miles of extent, which formerly contributed so much to its

glory. The surveyor has been among its vaults; he has stretched his chain along its galleries, he has broken the heart of its mystery, and, with cruel scale and protractor, he has laid it down upon paper. He has illustrated the truly remarkable fact, which none but the most cold-blooded of philosophers were ever before inclined to suspect—namely, that when you would know the true extent of any antre vast in which you have journeyed, the admiring of all admirers, you should first take the shortest extent you can possibly believe it to be, and then divide that length by the sum total of your thumbs and fingers, being satisfied that, if the answer be not exactly right, it will be extremely near it. Thus Weyer's cave in Virginia—the Antiparos of the Ancient Dominion, one of the loveliest grotts that fairy ever, or never, danced in—was, until recently surveyed, pretty universally considered as being full three miles in length. By the rule above, we should

bring its true extent down to between five and six hundred yards; a result that very closely coincides with the admeasurement of the surveyor. By the same rule, we should reduce the Mammoth Cave to two miles; which comes but little short of the truth. Nevertheless, the Mammoth Cave is still the monarch of caves: none that have ever been measured can at all compare with it, even in extent; in grandeur, in wild, solemn, severe, unadorned majesty, it stands entirely alone. "It has no brother, it is like no brother."

What I have said of the length of this cave, it must be observed, applies only to a single passage. It is a labyrinth of branches, of which the principal one is two miles and a half long. There are two or three others of nearly half that length. The extent of all the passages, taken together, is between eight and nine miles. There are, besides, many which have never been explored, and

perhaps never will be ; some opening in the sides and at the bottoms of pits that would appal a samphire-gatherer or an Orkney fowler ; others (of which there are countless numbers,) opening by orifices so narrow that nothing but blasting with gunpowder can ever render them practicable ; and perhaps as many more, accessible and convenient enough, but whose entrances, concealed among rocks and crannies, no lucky accident has yet discovered. The Deserted Chambers, forming a considerable portion of the whole cave, and now accessible through two different approaches, have only been known for a comparatively brief number of years ; and the Solitary Cave, with its groves of spar, its pools, and springs, and hollow-sounding floors, is a still more recent discovery.

The survey of the cave, as far as it is now known, we owe to Mr. Edmund F. Lee, an engineer of Cincinnati, who has executed his task with skill and fidelity. The difficulties,

labours (I might even say, the dangers) of his enterprise, in which he was occupied, I believe, three or four months—the whole winter of 1834–5, can only be appreciated by those who are familiarly acquainted with the cave. The exploit of surveying and levelling eight or nine miles of cavern appears to me unprecedented.*

The Mammoth Cave lies upon Green River, in a corner of Edmonson county, Kentucky, in the heart of the district long known as the Barrens, a vast extent of rolling hills and knobs, once bare and naked—prairies, in fact, as they were sometimes called, but now overshadowed by a young forest of blackjacks and other trees that delight in an arid soil. The whole country is one bed of limestone, with as many caverns below as there are hills above, both seeming to have been formed at the same

* Mr. Lee's Map, with the libretto of "Notes" accompanying it, published in Cincinnati, by James and Gazlay, interesting alike to the lovers of romance and of science, is a curious and valuable production.

moment, and by the same cause—some primeval convulsion by which the rocky substratum was torn to pieces, and the knobs heaped up. That earthquakes had something to do in carving out the caves of the West, no one will doubt who has clambered among those prodigious blocks of stone—masses which to move would have puzzled a Pelasgian builder of old—that lie strewn about the floors of the Mammoth Cave, shivered from the roofs and walls by some violent concussion. The earthquakes that formed them, seem, however, not always to have opened the ragged fissures to the air; that was left to another agency—the infiltration, in most instances, of water, by which the thinner and weaker portions of the crust were gradually disintegrated, and finally swept into the interior. The Mammoth Cave itself was evidently opened in this way, in remote times, after remaining sealed up for a long series of centuries; and in this case, as in most others, the mass of falling rocks, sinking across a spa-

cious excavation, has been sufficient to block it up in one direction, while yielding easy access in the other. The Horse-shoe Cave, however, a grotto twelve or fifteen miles distant from the Mammoth, is an instance in which the roof has fallen, without obstructing the passage on either side : you enter the cave, as it were, by a side door, and may penetrate with equal ease to the right hand or the left. In many cases there seem to exist caverns with no roof of rock at all, the fissure having extended to the top of the limestone, where it is covered over only by a thin layer of soil. It is not altogether an uncommon thing for a traveller in Kentucky to play the Curtius, and plunge, horse and man, into the bowels of the earth at a moment when he feels neither patriotic nor heroical, but very much like any other mortal. It was but two years ago that a gentleman of Lexington, ambling over his fields in the neighbourhood of that city, surveying his stacks of hemp, and speculating perhaps, like a philan-

thropist, upon the number of rascals his crop might be expected to hang, suddenly found himself sinking into the earth, whirling in a Maelstrom of clay and stones; from which, however, he succeeded in extricating himself by leaping briskly from his horse. The animal sank to a depth of one hundred and fifty feet, where he became wedged between two rocks, the sides of a cavern, and perished. A similar accident happened in the Barrens of which I speak, as early as 1795, when a planter of West Tennessee lost his horse, and saved himself in the same way; only, that on this occasion the animal tumbled into a more spacious cavern, in which he walked about until starved to death.

But let us hasten to the cave. It is midsummer. It was at that season, several years ago, I made my first, though not my only visit to the cave. It was the close of merry June—merry, yet not merry, for the pestilence was then abroad in the land, and men were

thinking and talking of nothing but cholera—when I, with an excellent friend, alas! now no more, (who was as eager as myself to escape to some nook where cholera was unknown, where our ears should be no longer pained, nor our souls sickened, by “every day’s report” of cases,) made my way to the heart of the Barrens, and in good time, one bright morning, found myself approaching the Mammoth Cave. The air was hot upon the hill-tops, hotter still in the little valleys that, with their lowly cabins of logs, and smiling, though half-cultivated corn-fields, presented here and there a few demi-oases in the desert of black-jacks, through which we were jogging. There was no breeze in the forest, but there was note of preparation among the white and sable-silvered clouds aloft, that now sent a heavy rain-drop plashing in our faces, and now woke the woods with rattling peals of thunder. But what cared we for shower or bolt? We were vagabondizing among the knobs; and, by and by, we

should be under the canopy of the cave, deep in vaults where the rain beats not, and the thunder is never heard. We are even now riding over its labyrinthine halls; each of these rocky hills is arched over one of its gloomy vaults; and it is in a glen upon the side of the very knob, on whose flat, plain-like summit we are now coursing to our journey's end, we are to find its darksome portals. Under this mouldering stile of logs, where we leave our Rozinantes, rejoiced to escape their excruciating backs, under this venerable, rickety porch, where we pause a moment to look around, at a depth of a hundred feet below is one of the largest chambers of the cave. The guide prepares his iron torches, his bucket of oil—or, to speak less poetically, his bucket of lard, (for here the fat of Leviathan is unknown,) and his basket of provisions; while we, exhorting him to despatch, set off to explore the mysteries of the glen, the redoubtable Cave Hollow ourselves.

But first let us seduce honest Bull, the great dog that has been wagging his tail at us in token of friendship, to lead us to the cavern. "You may get him into the hollow," quoth the guide, nodding his head; "but you won't get him into the cave; because dogs are exactly the people that won't go in, no way you can fix it.—They have a horror of it."—Verily, after we had ourselves got in, and seen the last glimmer of fading daylight swallowed up in midnight gloom, we began to think Bull's discretion not so very extraordinary. There actually is a point at which dogs begin to think of themselves in preference to their masters. I once saw a hulking cur, who boasted the same name Bull—as all big dogs, except Newfoundland ones, do—attempt to follow his master over the bridge above the falls of Niagara. It was a fine sunshiny day, and Bull, being in a joyous humour, had galloped a hundred yards or so along the bridge, without much thinking of where he

was or whither going. But on a sudden the idea struck his mind, or whatever part of him served for mind ; he stopped, applied his nose to a crack in the planks, and made a dead set at the horrible green and white billows beneath. " Come on, Bull !" cried his master from afar. " If I do," said Bull, " I wish I may —— ;" not that he actually said so much in words, but it was written in his eye. His tail fell, his ears began to rise, he stole a sidelong look at the waters above and the waters below ; and planted himself in the centre of the bridge, from which he refused to budge, except upon hard jostling even to let myself get by. His master called again and again ; and I believe Bull made some small effort to advance, stepping slowly and carefully forward, as if treading upon eggs. He did not, however, proceed far : and when I saw him last, he had come to a second stand, and was again surveying the boiling surges through the gaps of the planks, looking volumes of mute terror and

perplexity. How he ever got to firm land again I know not ; for he was evidently as much afraid to return as to advance.

Were there indeed such horrors in the Mammoth Cave as should make a dog a coward on instinct ? The thought sharpened our expectations, and we were the more eager to make its acquaintance.

And now let us descend the Cave-Hollow—a ravine that begins a mere gully at first, but, widening and deepening as you proceed, becomes at last, on the banks of the river, half a mile to the west, a valley that might almost be called spacious. It is bounded by ledges of calcareous rock overlaid by sand-stone, which, in some places, assume the appearance of precipices, and, in others, are piled together in loose blocks. Along the line of wall thus bounding the valley, spring tall oak trees and chestnuts, rooted among the rocks ; while elms, and walnuts, maples and papaws, and a thousand other trees, with vines, weeds, brambles,

and many a glaring wild-flower, occupy the depths of the hollow, shutting it out almost as much from the blue heaven above as its rocky walls seclude it from the habitable earth around. A brook that runs when the clouds run, and at no other period, has ploughed a rugged channel down one side of the glen ; and along its banks or in its parched bed, as seems most convenient, we make our way, looking for the cave, which refuses to be found ; hiding from the sun, which, however, neither the scudding thunder clouds nor the embowering tree tops can wholly keep from our visages ; and sighing for something to “ allay the burning quality ” of the atmosphere, some cool breeze stirred by the wing of Favonius from fountain-side or brim, some — But soft ! we have our wish ; a cool breeze does at last breathe over our cheeks ; it rolls a gentle and invisible stream, a river of air, down the valley. On that grassy terrace above, we shall enjoy it. On that grassy terrace we step, and the cave

yawns before us !—The breeze, at first so cool, and now so icy, comes from its marble jaws ; it is the breath of the monster.

How dark, how dismal, how dreary ! The platform sinks abruptly under your feet, forming a steep and broken declivity of thirty or more feet in descent, and as much in width. From the bottom of the abyss just formed, springs an arch, whose top is on a level lower even than your feet, while the massive rock that crowns it is on a plane which you can still overlook. The cave is therefore under your feet ; you look down upon it ; it is subterraneous even at its entrance ; and this is a circumstance which adds double solemnity and horror to its appearance. In other respects its aspect is haggard and ghastly in the extreme. The gray rocks, consisting of thick horizontal plates, forming ledges and galleries, along the sides ; the long grasses, the nodding ferns, the green mosses and lichens, that have fastened among their crannies ; the pit immediately un-

der the spring of the arch, loosely choked with beams, planks, earth, and stones ; the stream of crystal water oozing from the mosses on the face of the crowning rock, and falling with a wild pattering sound upon the ruins below ; the dismal blackness of the vacuity, in which objects are obscurely traced only for a few fathoms ; and the ever-breathing blast, so cold, so strange, so sepulchre-like, form together a picture of desolation and gloom inconceivably awful and repelling. Indeed, instances not unfrequently occur where visitors are so much overcome by its appearance, as to fall back upon their instincts, like honest Bull the dog, and refuse to enter it altogether. A singular addition is given to its dreariness by the presence of several mouldering beams of wood stretched across the mouth from ledge to ledge, and two tottering chimneys of stone, behind the cotton-wood tree on the right hand ; the ruins of old saltpetre works, the manufacture of which villanous compound, in

the last war, was carried on to a great extent in the cave. But peace came, and with it those curses of trade, low prices, by which the manufacturers were scattered to the winds, and the Mammoth Cave again left to its solitude. But that is its proper condition. A city at Niagara, a factory in the Mammoth Cave, are consummations of enterprising ambition only to be hoped for by men whose hearts are of gold and silver, and their nerves and brains of the dross thereof.

How dark, how dismal, how dreary ! One would think that no living creature, save man alone, the lover of romance and adventure, would willingly enter this horrible pit. Yet a swallow has built her nest under the grim arch ; and as she darts with flashing wing through the thin waters of the falling brook, and turns gamesomely about, and darts through them again and again, her twitter-

ing cries are as full of jocund mirth as of music. What is it to her that all around is darkness, fear, and desolation? The chirping of her young from the shattered roof makes the cave her paradise. And that little lizard, striped with azure and scarlet, that dances around the trunk of the stunted crab-apple growing on the face of the descent—the most beautiful, delicate, graceful, resplendent, mischievous little rascal my eyes ever beheld—he mocks me, but he will not let me catch him!—there is something here, though what I know not, to make the chill, moist entrance of the cave more delightful even to *him* than the gray, heated rocks above, where his comrades are basking. And yet the lizard and swallow are frisking at the mouth of a sepulchre! The nitre taken from this cave was dug from among the bones of buried Indians. If we can believe the account of those who should know best, many a generation of dead

men sleeps among the vaults of the Mammoth Cave. Perhaps this thought, busy in the mind of the visiter, invests its aspect with a more awful solemnity than it really possesses.

CHAPTER III.

DESCENT INTO THE CAVE—THE NARROWS—THE BLAST OF
CAVES—THUNDER-STORM—THE VESTIBULE.

BUT let us descend. The guide has arrived ; the swinging torches are tied each to its staff, and lighted ; our canteens are filled from the trough that receives the crystal brook, and all is ready for the subterranean journey. Enter the mighty portal—

Arch'd so high, that giants may jet through,
And keep their impious turbands on, without
Good morrow to

the gloom. How ragged and shivered is the broken roof above, as if those aforesaid giants with the "turbands on" had been employed

to rough-hew the arch. But the floor is firm, dry, smooth clay: so far we owe thanks to the nitre-diggers, who have constructed a path—it almost might be called a carriage-road — half a mile into the cave.

Over this path, ringing with sonorous clang to every footstep, facing full to the east — yet what an east! an Orient that never knew a dawn—the thunder roaring behind us, (for the storm has at last burst,) and the gust of the cave murmuring hollow in front, we trudge along; until, sixty paces from the dripping-spring, we find ourselves at the Narrows, where the roof is but seven or eight feet high, and the width of the cave not much greater. The passage has been still further contracted by a wall built up by the miners, leaving only a narrow door-way, that was formerly provided with a leaf to exclude the cold air of winter. Here, if the nervous visiter has not been appalled at the entrance, he will perhaps be dismayed by the furious

blast rushing like a winter tempest through the door. Its strength is indeed astonishing. It deprives him of breath, and, what is worse, of light ; the torches are blown out ; they are relighted and again extinguished : we must grope our way through in the dark, and trust to flint and steel. It is done : once through the narrow door, and the wind appals no longer. All is calm and still, a few feet within the wall ; it is only at the contracted gap that we feel the fury of the current. In the winter, or at any other period of cold weather, the blast is reversed ; the current is then inwards.

There are numerous caves in America, as well as in other parts of the world, which exhibit the phenomena of the *blast* ; and this has usually been reckoned one of their chief wonders. It has given rise among philosophers to a deal of fanciful theory, which, perhaps, would never have been indulged in, had not observers in the first place mystified

the whole subject by recording facts that only existed in their imagination. Thus, some caves are said to blow in and out, without much regard to the state of the weather, a wonder which was only to be explained by supposing the existence of intermitting fountains—that is, of vast pools alternately rising and falling, and so, by increasing or diminishing the space within, expelling or inhaling the air; while others again were reported to blow out perpetually—as in the case of the cave at the Panther Gap in Virginia, described by Mr. Jefferson. This cave Mr. Jefferson, I think, could never have seen, as he describes it (in very loose terms, it must be confessed) as having an entrance “of about one hundred feet diameter;” whereas all travellers represent the outlet as being quite small. Allowing that he describes it on mere hear-say, we need attach no great weight to his assertion, that the current “is strongest in dry, frosty weather, and weakest in long spells of

rain." That it does blow in the summer is well ascertained ; that it blows at all in winter, I feel strongly disposed to doubt, having heard that part of the story contradicted by a person residing in the neighbourhood of the Gap. Our opinion is, that all caves of any magnitude blow ; that the blast becomes perceptible only when the outlet is very small ; that it is in all caves alike—the blast being outward in hot, and inward in cold weather ; and that to understand the mystery, nothing more is required than to place a candle in a door communicating betwixt a very warm and a very cold room, holding it first near the floor, when a cold current will be found rushing into the warm room, and then near the lintel, where a warm current will be found rushing out. In other words, we think that there is a double current flowing, Mediterranean-wise, at the mouth of every cave, and flowing always, except when the temperatures within and without are the same ; a

cold current at the bottom rushing out in summer, and in during the winter, and a warm one above flowing in the contrary direction, a perpetual circulation of air being thus kept up. This is an idea, which, being too simple and natural to be readily conceived, did not occur to us when it was in our power to verify or disprove it at the Mammoth Cave, as we had many opportunities to do. Our mind, in fact, on all such occasions, was engaged with a sublimer idea. We thought of musical strings—a great *Æolian* lyre—stretched across the door, and waked to majestic music by the breath of the cave—such solemn strains as were poured by the “ingenious instrument” of Belarius over the dying Imogen.

But we have passed the windy gap, and are in the cave, where all is silence and tranquillity. The thunder is still raving in the upper air, but its peals already come faintly to the ear: a few more steps and they will be

inaudible. With a rock a hundred feet thick over our heads, we can defy their fury, and forget it. Armies of a hundred thousand men might fight a Waterloo on the hills above, and we know nothing of it. At least, we should hear neither drum nor trumpet, nor sound of artillery; though cascades of blood, falling where we are to find only cascades of water, might impart the hideous secret. Our torches are relighted, making each

“A little glooming light, much like a shade,”

which we take care to direct to the sounding floor, to watch our footing, satisfied, after one or two eager efforts to penetrate the gloom that has now invested us, that nothing is to be seen until we have got out *cave eyes*. We catch, to be sure, a dim glance, now and then, of a low roof almost touching our heads, of two rugged walls that are ever and anon rude to our elbows; one of them — that is,

one of the walls—the workmanship of Nature herself, though of Nature in no pains-taking mood, the other piled up on the left hand by the nitre-diggers of old, who were thus wont to dispose of the loose rocks that came in their way. You are sensible you are threading a path as narrow as the road of Honour,—

“A strait so narrow,
Where one but goes abreast;”

and you begin to have your doubts whether the Mammoth Cave is, after all, all it has been represented to be. You get tired even of admiring the musical ringings of the guide's footsteps on the hard earthen floor; you are sure you have trudged a quarter of a mile already, (the guide assures you, half a mile,) along this dismal, low, narrow, stupid passage; you become impatient; you demand “if there is nothing better to be seen;” and the guide, answering by bidding you look to your footing — which, however, you are doing of

your own accord, the path having suddenly become broken—at last directs you to pause, and look around—What now do you see?

What now do we see? Midnight—the blackness of darkness—nothing! Where are we? where is the wall we were lately elbowing out of the way? It has vanished, it is lost; we are walled in by darkness, and darkness canopies us above. Look again; swing your torches aloft! Ay, now you can see it, far up, a hundred feet above your head, a gray ceiling rolling dimly away like a cloud; and heavy buttresses, bending under the weight, curling and toppling over their base, begin to project their enormous masses from the shadowy wall. How vast, how solemn, how awful! And how silent, how dreadfully silent! The little bells of the brain are ringing in your ears; you hear nothing else, not even a sigh of air, not even the echo of a drop of water falling from the roof. The guide triumphs in your looks of amazement and awe,

he takes advantage of your feelings, all so solemn and romantic:—"Them that says the Mammoth ain't a rale tear-cat don't know nothing about it!"—

With which truly philosophic interjection, he falls to work on certain old wooden ruins, to you yet invisible, and builds a brace or two of fires; by the aid of which you begin to have a better conception of the scene around you. You are in the Vestibule, or ante-chamber, to which the spacious entrance of the cave and the narrow passage that succeeds it, should be considered the mere gateway and covered approach. It is a basilica of an oval figure, two hundred feet in length by one hundred and fifty wide, with a roof, which is as flat and level as if finished by the trowel of the plasterer, of fifty or sixty, or even more, feet in height. Two passages, each a hundred feet in width, open into it at its opposite extremities, but in right angles to each other; and as they preserve a straight course for five or six hun-

dred feet, with the same flat roof common to each, the appearance to the eye is that of a vast hall in shape of the letter L, expanded at the angle, both branches being five hundred feet long by a hundred wide. The passage on the right hand is the Great Bat Room; that in front, the beginning of the Grand Gallery, or the main cavern itself. The whole of this prodigious space is covered by a single rock, in which the eye can detect no break or interruption, save at its borders, where is a broad sweeping cornice, traced in horizontal panel-work, exceedingly noble and regular; and not a single pier or pillar of any kind contributes to support it. It needs no support; it is like the arched and ponderous roof of the poet's mausoleum,

“by its own weight made steadfast and immoveable.”

The floor is very irregularly broken, consisting of vast heaps of the nitrous earth, and of the ruins of the hoppers, or vats, composed

of heavy planking, in which the miners were accustomed to leach it. This hall was, in fact, one of their chief factory rooms. Before their day, it was a cemetery; and here they disinterred many a mouldering skeleton, belonging, it seems, to that gigantic eight or nine feet race of men of past days, whose jaw-bones so many thousand veracious persons have clapped over their own, like horse-collars, without laying by a single one to convince the soul of scepticism.

Such is the Vestibule of the Mammoth Cave—a hall which hundreds of visitors have passed through without being conscious of its existence. The path leading into the Grand Gallery hugs the wall on the left hand, and is, besides, in a hollow, flanked on the right hand by lofty mounds of earth, which the visiter, if he looks at them at all, as he will scarcely do at so early a period after entering, will readily suppose to be the opposite walls. Those who enter the Bat Rooms—into which flying visitors are

seldom conducted—will indeed have some faint suspicion, for a moment, that they are passing through infinite space; but the walls of the cave being so dark as not to reflect one single ray of light from the dim torches, and a greater number of them being necessary to disperse the gloom than are usually employed, they will still remain in ignorance of the grandeur around them. In an attempt which we made to secure a drawing of the Vestibule, we had it lighted up with a dozen or more torches and flambeaux, and two or three bonfires beside; but still the obscurity was so great that it was necessary, in sketching any one part, to have the torches for the time held before it. It was, in fact, impossible to light it up so as to embrace all its striking features in one view. We saw enough of it, however, to determine its quality. It possesses not one particle of beauty; but its grandeur, its air of desolation combined with majesty, are unspeakably impressive.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BAT ROOMS — THE CREVICE PIT — TRAGEDY OF THE
PIT CAVE.

BUT let us enter the Bat Rooms — the Big Bat room and the Little one — the latter being a narrow branch of the former, remarkable only for its two pits, one of which, the Crevice Pit, is the deepest that has been measured in the whole cave.

The Big Bat Room is about one third of a mile long, counting from its entrance, which is not half a mile, as is generally supposed, but just three hundred yards from the mouth of the cave. It is interesting only from its width and height, which it preserves nearly

to the end unimpaired. It terminates in mounds of massive sandstone, that, with the assistance of water ever dripping through them, have crushed in the roof, leaving a shadowy dome above them. The Little Bat Room opens in its left wall, six or seven hundred feet from the Vestibule. It is long, winding, low, and deep; and was once the bed of a torrent that has worn its walls into a thousand figures, with numerous winding holes which lead perhaps into other caverns, but are too small to be entered. It is now dry, like other parts of the cave, and blackened by age, or by the smoke of the torches of the ancient inhabitants of the cave and the miners. Within but a few feet of its extremity, there are two low-browed niches, one in each wall, nearly opposite each other, the blackest, ugliest looking places in the whole world, particularly that on the left hand, which is a hundred times blacker and uglier than the other. One feels an instinctive hor-

ror of this place at the very first look, and perceives a crab-like inclination in his legs to sidle away from it, if not to beat a retreat altogether. There never was better occasion for instinct. Under that niche, down to which the rocky floor you stand on so treacherously inclines, is a pit three hundred feet deep—ay, by'r Lady! and perhaps three times three hundred more to the back of them, if not three times three thousand — who can tell? Mr. Lee struck bottom at two hundred and eighty feet; but, as in the case of the Bottomless Pit, to be spoken of hereafter, a stone thrown down tells quite another story. Bang, bang, rattle, rattle, bang, bang again, down it goes; now loud, now low, now loud again, and then softer and softer, until the sound gradually becomes inaudible. One false step on this villanous floor, and the thing is settled. You roll over, as a matter of course; and, as another matter of course, that hideous niche receives you into its jaws, ever gaping

for prey, like the jaws of a sleeping alligator in fly time; and then comes the plunge of the three hundred feet, the crashing of bone and flesh, the—pah!

But let us sit down by its brink; the guide has many a wild and dreary story to tell, which can be best told in such a place as this.

And, first, he tells us that this identical abyss — the Crevice Pit, as it is called — sounded by Mr. Lee in 1835, with a string having a stone tied to the end of it, was sounded, many a long year before, by the miners, pretty much in the same way; only that, instead of a stone to the string, they had a young negro tied to the end of it. However, this highly original plummet, it appears, was tied on with its own consent, the lad being a bold romantic fellow, ambitious to signalize himself by a daring exploit, and perhaps a brilliant discovery. Down, therefore, into the pit they lowered him;

though with an effect singularly resembling that attending the Knight of La Mancha's descent into the cave of Montesinos. The rope suddenly became light, its burden had vanished; though, in due course of time, it again felt heavy in the hands of the miners, who, drawing it up, found the adventurer at its end as before. Some very wondrous story he told them, with great glee, of his having discovered, fifty or sixty feet below, a spacious and splendid cave, in which he had walked; but as he never after could be, by any persuasions, induced to attempt a second descent, it was thought he had imitated Don Quixote to the letter, ensconced himself on the first convenient ledge or shelf, and dreamed the remainder of the adventure.

The Mammoth Cave, as I observed, was wrought for saltpetre during the last war, when the price of that article was so high, and the profits of the manufacturer so great, as to set half the western world gadding

after nitre caves — the gold mines of their day. Cave-hunting, in fact, became a kind of mania, beginning with speculators, and ending with hair-brained young men, who dared from the love of adventure the risks that others ran for profit. As might be expected, this passion was not always indulged without accident; and several caves in Kentucky and Tennessee obtained a mournful celebrity as the scenes of painful suffering and disaster. In some cases, caves have been entered by explorers who were never again known to leave them, and around whose fate yet hangs the deepest mystery. Accidents, not attended with loss of life, were of frequent occurrence; and, as for frights, they were lumped together in report, in the style of a constable's inventory, as too tedious to mention.

Among the tragical incidents illustrative of the time and the mania, told by the guide at the Crevice Pit, the following I consider

worthy of being recorded, and the more so as it occurred within the immediate vicinity, and had therefore gained nothing by

“Travelling with increase from mouth to mouth.”

Four or five miles from the Mammoth Cave, a few paces from the bridle-path over the Knobs, by which the visiter coming from Bell's at the Three Forks, reaches it, is a cave known as the Pit Cave, though sometimes called, I believe, Wright's Cave, after the name of the person who first attempted to explore it. This man was a speculator, who, having some reason to believe the cave a valuable one, resolved to examine it; but possessing little knowledge of caves, and less of the business of the nitre-maker, he applied to Mr. Gatewood, the proprietor of the works at the Mammoth Cave, and of course experienced in both these particulars, to assist him in the search. A day was accordingly appointed, on which Mr. Gatewood agreed to meet him at the cave, and conduct the ex-

ploration in person. But on that day, as it happened, there arose a furious storm of rain and thunder; and Mr. Gatewood, not supposing that even Wright himself would, under such circumstances, keep the appointment, remained at his own works. In the mean while, however, Wright had reached the cave, in company with another man, a miner, though of no great experience in cave-hunting; and with him, finding that Mr. Gatewood did not come, and having made all his preparations, he resolved to undertake the exploration himself. This the two men commenced, and pursued for several hours without accident and without fear, seeing, indeed, nothing to excite alarm, except a cluster of very dangerous pits, which they passed while engaged in the search; but by and by, having consumed much time in rambling about, they discovered that, by some extraordinary oversight, they had left their store of candles at the mouth of the cave, having brought in with them

only those they carried in their hands, which were now burning low. The horrors of their situation at once flashed on their minds; they were at a great distance from the entrance, which there was little hope they could reach with what remained of their candles, and the terrible pits were directly on their path. It was thought, however, that if they could succeed in passing these, it might be possible to grope their way from the cave in the dark, as the portion beyond the pits offered no unusual interruptions, and was without branches. The attempt was made; and as desperation gave speed to their feet, they had, at last, the inexpressible satisfaction to reach the pits, and to pass them in safety, leaving them several hundred feet behind, ere their lights entirely failed. But now began their difficulties. In the confusion and agitation of mind which beset them at the moment when the last candle expired, they neglected to set their faces firmly towards the entrance; and

in consequence, when darkness at last suddenly surrounded them, they were bewildered and at variance; Wright vehemently insisting that they should proceed in one direction, the miner contending with equal warmth that the other was the right one.

The violence of Wright prevailed over the doubts of his follower, who allowed himself to be governed by the former, especially when the desperate man offered to lead the way, so as to be the first to encounter the pits, supposing he should be wrong. An expedient for testing the safety of the path which Wright hit upon, had also its effect on his companion's mind; he proposed, as he crawled along on his hands and feet—the only way they dare attempt to proceed in the dark over the broken floor—to throw stones before him, by means of which it would be easy to tell when a pit lay in the way. The miner, accordingly, though with many misgivings, suffered himself to be ruled, and followed at Wright's heels, the latter every

moment hurling a stone before him, and at every throw uttering some hurried exclamation, now a prayer, now a word of counsel or encouragement to his companion, though always expressive of the deepest agitation and disorder of mind. They had proceeded in this way for several moments, until even the miner himself, believing that if they were in error, they had crawled far enough to reach the pits, became convinced his employer was in the right path ; when, suddenly the clang of one of the stones cast by Wright, falling as if on the solid floor, was succeeded by a rushing sound, the clatter of loose rocks rolling down a declivity, and then a heavy hollow crash at a depth beneath. He called to Wright ; no answer was returned ; all was dismal silence ; not even a groan from the wretched employer replied to the call. His fate the terrified miner understood in a moment : the first of the pits was, at one part of its brink, shelving ; on the declivity thus formed the stone cast by Wright had

lodged; but Wright had slipped from it into the pit, and slipped so suddenly as not to have time to utter even one cry of terror. The miner, overcome with horror, after calling again and again, without receiving any answer, or hearing any sound whatever, turned in the opposite direction, and endeavoured to effect his own escape from the cave. He wandered about many hours, now sinking down in despair, now struggling again for life; until at last yielding to his fate in exhaustion of mind and body, incapable of making any further exertions, a sudden ray of light sparkled in his face. He rushed forward—it was the morning star shining through the mouth of the cave! The alarm was immediately given. Mr. Gatewood, with a party of his labourers, hurried to the cave and to the pit, on whose shelving edge were seen evidences enough of some heavy body having lately rolled into it. The offer of a reward conquered the terror of one of the workmen, who was lowered with ropes to the

bottom of the pit, a depth of fifty or sixty feet ; and Wright's lifeless body was drawn out.

The above tragical incident I have heard confirmed by the lips of several different persons ; one of whom, however, contested the right of the morning star to figure in it ; affirming that the miner made his way out before night, and that it was the light of day, shining at a distance like a star, which gave rise to that poetical embellishment. I believe he was right. It is thus, like a star—the loveliest of all the lamps that spangle the vault of night — that daylight breaks from afar upon the adventurer returning from the depths of the Mammoth Cave.

CHAPTER V.

**THE MURDERS OF THE CAVE INN — GRAND GALLERY —
THE CHURCH — NITRE WORKS — HAUNTED CHAMBERS.**

Among other stories told at the Crevice Pit, was one — wild and terrible enough, if true — of a man who, in former days, was master of a little tavern on a public road, some twenty miles off; at which place of entertainment it began to be remarked by the neighbours, more travellers called than were ever known to leave it. Immediately behind the house, not fifty yards from the road, is a cavern, which, if its interior corresponds with its entrance, must be of uncommon grandeur. It opens from

the level ground, by a sink or declivity like that of the Mammoth Cave; but the descent is much less precipitous, as well as wider and longer, making a wild little glen, studded with rocks, bushes, and trees, that terminates under a vast, marble-looking arch, the mouth of the cave. The view from this mouth, looking back to the glen, is inexpressibly grand and beautiful,—a vista, or picture, one might fancy, of a waste nook of Paradise, set or framed in a grotto-work of stone. The cavern is said to continue only for about a hundred yards, when it is suddenly lost in a vast pit of unknown depth.

The keeper of the Cave inn the story represents as a dark villain, accustomed to rob and murder all travellers rich enough to reward his trouble; for which purpose, as well as for that of concealment, the cave behind the house afforded him unusual facilities. His plan of proceedings, when he had resolved the death of a traveller, was, first, under the

plea of looking after the victim's horse before going to bed, to lead the animal from the stable into the cave, and force him into the pit; then, with an appearance of concern, to inform the traveller his beast had strayed into the cave among the rocks, whence he could not remove him without assistance; and thus obtain the latter to accompany him into the infernal den, where, arriving at the chasm, a sudden blow or push precipitated the human victim also into the gulf, and with him all evidence of the crime by which he had perished.

This horrible story I afterwards heard repeated by other persons, some of whom declared that the innkeeper's villany had been finally brought to light by the confessions of an agonized wife, the witness, though not the accomplice, of his murders; while others thought that his guilt rested merely upon suspicion, for which the sudden disappearance of several travellers unfortunately gave too

many grounds. I must confess that none of my informants were very positive in their modes of telling the story, and none able to vouch for its truth; while one cautious or iudicious personage professed an entire disbelief in the innkeeper's guilt, hinting that the whole story had grown out of the wild prattling of a woman, the poor man's wife, who was, in the narrator's opinion, a mere unhappy lunatic. The tale, however, had currency enough to give the suspected man trouble, and he soon afterwards left the country, and was no more heard of.

But let us retrace our steps to the Vestibule; let us enter the Grand Gallery,—for we have yet much to see, or, rather, we have all to see and much to hear.

The Grand Gallery is a hundred feet wide, with an average height of forty or fifty. Its roof is for the most part flat and regular, its walls broken by massive buttresses, that here and there stare out of the gloom, and salute

us with a rocky frown. Fancy traces among them a thousand majestic resemblances to scenes recollected or imagined in the external world. On the right hand we see the Rocky Mountains — the Chippewyan in little, without the superfluous caps of snow ; on the left, the Cliffs of Kentucky — excellent likenesses all, as far as crags fifty feet high, bare and desolate, and shrouded in never-ending night, can resemble cliffs of three hundred feet, adorned with trees and flowers, shining like marble in the brave sunshine, and glassing their beauty in the crystal river below. Among these Kentucky cliffs, just under the ceiling, is a gap in the wall, into which you can scramble, and make your way down a chaotic gulf, creeping like a rat under and among huge loose rocks, to a depth of eighty or ninety feet ; — that is, you can do all this, provided you do not break your neck before you get half-way.

A hundred yards further on, the roof sud-

denly sinks somewhat, forming an inclined plane, on which clouds seem to float as in a midnight sky. And here Nature, who, in these same clouds, proves that she is not so good a painter below the earth as she is above, has scooped out a spacious cove on the left hand, as wide and high as the Grand Gallery into which it opens, but of little more than a hundred feet in extent. Here, among rude rocks, has been constructed a still ruder altar—a wooden desk, or pulpit; from which, while torches shone around from crag to crag, the preacher has proclaimed the word of God, and the voices of a congregation have arisen in solemn hosannas. The services of worship in such a place must have been strangely and profoundly impressive. It is a cathedral which, man feels, has been piled, not by the art of man, but by the will of his Maker. But it is a place to inculcate religious fear, rather than pious affection.

Another hundred yards beyond the Church

—for so the cove of the pulpit is called—and you find yourself again among the ruins of nitre works. The spacious floor is occupied with vats filled in with earth, which is now, however, beginning to sink, giving to the place somewhat the air of an ancient and neglected cemetery—a cemetery of Brobdignags. A tall frame-work of timber, that once supported a forcing pump, is yet standing in the midst. Opposite to it, a ladder is seen resting against the right hand wall. Looking up, you perceive a gap in the wall fifty feet wide, and twenty high, with several huge rocks lying in it, one of them looking like a tower commanding the savage pass. This is the entrance of the Haunted Chambers.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GRAND GALLERY—CAVE ATMOSPHERE—WHISPERING
TUBES—BRIDGE GALLERY—THE BELL—STALACTITES—
THE REGISTER ROOM—THE MINER AND THE DEVILS.

WE have arrived, then, at the entrance of the Haunted Chambers—a distance of barely half a mile from the mouth of the cave; and we have still seven or eight miles of wonders before us. To describe these in detail would be an endless undertaking, and, to the reader, a dull and unprofitable one—as no description, however minute, could possibly convey accurate ideas of them. In fact, an extended description of a cave would, in any case,

prove wearisome. The components, the elements of caves, are few and simple — rocks, stalactites, pools, pits, and darkness make up all their variety ; and however interestingly, and even variously, these may be combined to the eye of an actual spectator, the descriptions of them must consist of repetitions of the same words—of changes rung over and over again upon the same ideas. My aim is, therefore, not so much to describe the Mammoth Cave in detail, as to present a general idea of it, pausing to dwell, here and there, upon features that are most important and interesting, and upon the impressions produced by them on the visiter's mind.

But let us, before resuming our explorations, say a word of the atmosphere of the cave ; which, having been, at the entrance, pronounced so icy, it may be feared, still retains its hyperborean character. It is icy, however, as we soon discover, only by con-

trast. The transition from an atmosphere of ninety or ninety-five degrees without, into one of about fifty-five or sixty within the cave, may well make us shiver for a moment. The average temperature of the Mammoth Cave is about fifty-eight degrees Fahrenheit. In summer it rises a few degrees higher, and in winter sinks as many below. It is, therefore, always temperate. Its purity, judging from its effects upon the lungs, and from other circumstances, is remarkable, though in what its purity consists I know not. But be its composition what it may, it is certain, that its effects upon the spirits and bodily powers of visitors are extremely exhilarating; and that it is not less salubrious than enlivening. The nitre-diggers were a famously healthy set of men: it was a common and humane practice to employ labourers of enfeebled constitutions, who were soon restored to health and strength, though kept at constant labour; and more joyous, merry fellows were never seen.

The oxen, of which several were kept, day and night, in the cave hauling the nitrous earth, were, after a month or two of toil, in as fine condition for the shambles as if fattened in the stall.

The ordinary visiter, though rambling a dozen hours or more over paths of the roughest and most difficult kinds, is seldom conscious of fatigue, until he returns to the upper air; and then it seems to him, at least in the summer season, that he has exchanged the atmosphere of paradise for that of a charnel warmed by steam, all without is so heavy, so dank, so dead, so mephitic. Awe, and even apprehension, if that has been felt, soon yield to the influence of the delicious air of the cave; and, after a time, a certain jocund feeling is found mingled with the deepest impressions of sublimity, which there are so many objects to awake. I recommend all broken-hearted lovers and dyspeptic dandies to carry their complaints to the Mammoth

Cave, where they will undoubtedly find themselves "translated" into very buxom and happy persons, before they are aware of it.

In the Grand Gallery, opposite the entrance of the Haunted Chambers, are, as was previously mentioned, the ruins of the old nitre-works — leaching-vats, pump frames, and lines of wooden pipes. Of the last there are two different ranges, one of which was formerly used for bringing fresh water from the dripping-spring to the vats; the other for forcing it, when saturated with the salt, back to the furnaces at the mouth of the cave. These pipes, now mouldering with dry-rot, serve at present no other purpose than to amuse visitors; they are acoustical telegraphs through which the adventurer who has penetrated so far, can transmit to his more timid friend at the entrance an assurance that he is yet in safety. A whisper bears the intelligence: even a sigh, breathed into the tube, falls as distinctly on the ear half a mile off as if the

friend who breathed it were reclining at the listener's elbow.

At this place, the roof of the Grand Gallery, perhaps thirty or thirty-five feet high, suddenly rises to about the height of fifty, which it however preserves for a distance of only fifty or sixty feet, when it again sinks to its former level. The break thus made in the ceiling, forms a part of the continuous lines of the Haunted Chambers, which may be considered as an independent cave, running at right angles with the Mammoth, and above it; although, dipping downward, as it crosses from right to left, it has broken through into the latter. It can be entered only on the right hand, where it opens in the wall, fifteen or more feet from the floor; a wide and lofty passage, cumbered with rocks, the chief of which is the Tower Rock,—a massive block, that looks, when viewed from below, the guide perched, flambeau in hand, on the top, like some old Saxon strong-hold

not yet in ruins. You see this cave continued also on the left hand, where is a gap in the wall still wider and higher, but choked up by an immense mound of coarse sand and gravel, impacted and hardened by time, which has entirely obliterated the passage. Curiosity has not yet attempted to dig a path through this barrier, heaped up by some mighty flood of old days ; though a few hours' labour might perhaps disclose a new batch of wonders and mysteries. Clambering up the huge sand-heap, till you reach what from below seemed the ceiling, you perceive on one hand a broad cornice-work like that seen in the Vestibule, which runs from the choked-up passage clear across the Grand Gallery, until it is lost in the entrance of the Haunted Chambers opposite. Surveying this cornice-work more closely, you find that it consists of a broad horizontal plate of rock, forming a gallery, or bridge, by which you may walk across the Grand Gallery immediately under

its roof, into the Haunted Chambers, landing on the top of the Tower Rock. But it is an *Al-Sirat*,—a bridge for disembodied spirits, rather than mortals of flesh and bone, to traverse. It has an ugly inclination or dip downwards, and looks as if expressly contrived for dropping ambitious personages into the horrible profound below. Shall we enter the Haunted Chambers by this highway of the dauntless—the Bridge Gallery, so narrow, so treacherous, so dizzy? Not if we were as solidipous as an elephant; not if we had air-pumps to our feet, like lizards and house-flies. The broad ladder laid against the wall, rickety and somewhat rungless though it be, and leading humbly, a lubber-way, to the foot of the Tower, is more to our own taste. It is but six or seven well-stretched steps from rung to rung, and we are in the Haunted Chambers, whose name itself fills us with expectant awe.

Our guide leaves us to admire alone the

gulf-like abyss of the Grand Gallery, now under our feet ; he has stolen away in advance, and his steps are no longer heard clattering along the rocky path. But hark ! what sound is that, like the deep bell of a cathedral, or the gong of a theatre, booming in the distance, peal after peal, clang after clang, so solemn, so wild, so strange ? A walk, with a few stumbles and tumbles—we have not yet our cave-legs (there are cave-legs as well as sea-legs)—reveals the mystery ; and we discover our conductor standing under a pendant stalactite, thumping it with great enthusiasm and a big stone, and filling the surrounding vaults with the clangour of his flinty drum. This is one of the many bells (so called) which the Mammoth Cave, in common with most other caves, possesses.

We have reached, then, the abode of stalactites ? Ay, here they are, pillars old and dry (for the oozing springs that formed them have long since vanished), venerable and majestic

columns, once perhaps white and ghastly, like so many giants in winding-sheets, but now black, withered, and mummy-like, begrimed with smoke, that has been fastening around them for many generations. Here we see them in groves, looking like the trunks of an old forest at midnight, the rough concretions on the low roof seeming not unlike the umbrage of thick matted boughs; there they appear singly, or in cosey family groups—Niobe and her children, Dian and her nymphs, or any such mythologic party—that Nature, like an idle sculptor, began a thousand years ago, to hew out of stone, without, however, hewing enough to enable us to guess what might have been her real intentions.

The name of the Haunted Chambers, however poetical it may be, is incorrect, inasmuch as it conveys the idea of a series of different chambers; whereas this branch of the cave consists of but a single passage, fifty or sixty feet wide and half a mile long, leading to a

lower branch, which is of equal extent, though of inferior width. The whole length of the Haunted Chambers is, therefore, one mile. The upper branch is chiefly remarkable on account of its stalactites; at the foot of one of which—the arm-chair, as it is called, from having a very royal seat hollowed in its side—is a little basin or pool of stone, that once received a drip of water, strongly charged with sulphur, from the roof above. It is now dry, the spring having gradually sealed up the crack through which it formerly flowed. Another remarkable feature of this branch is seen in its ceiling, which, except in the immediate neighbourhood of the stalactitic formations, where it is studded over with concretions of all imaginable shapes, is surprisingly flat and smooth, and in some places white, looking as if it had been actually finished off by the plasterer. This is particularly observable in a place called the Register Room, where, the roof being low enough for the purpose,

visitors frequently trace their names with the smoke of a candle ; and many hundreds of such records of vanity are already to be seen deforming the ceiling. Its smoothness is owing to an incrustation or deposit of calcareous matter on the surface of the rock ; though how it could ever be deposited so regularly may well be wondered at.

Within two hundred yards of the termination of this upper branch of the Haunted Chambers, the visiter finds himself suddenly plunging down a steep of loose red sand, poetically entitled the Lover's Leap, into a hollow ; at the bottom of which, in the left hand wall, is a very narrow but lofty fissure, the Devil's Elbow, winding through the wall and leading into the lower branch ; where under the roots of the stalactites that pillar the branch above, he may spend an hour or two among domes, pits, and sounding springs that come spouting or showering down from the roof, with the name, if not the grandeur

and beauty of waterfalls. The great Dome—or Bonaparte's Grand Dome, as the guides delight to call it—is a lofty excavation, in figure of a truncated cone, in the solid roof, from which a prodigious mass of rocks must have fallen to make it. These rocks are, however, nowhere to be seen ; the floor is flat and solid below. They must have been swept away by some raging flood ; or it may be, that there was formerly, below the dome, a pit, into which they fell, the pit being thus filled up, and its entrance gradually obliterated by incrustation.

The Haunted Chambers are said to owe their name to an adventure that befell one of the miners in former days, which is thus related.—In the Lower Branch is a room called the Salts Room, which produces considerable quantities of the Sulphate of Magnesia, or of Soda, we forget which—a mineral that the proprietor of the cave did not fail to turn to account. The miner in question was a new

and raw hand — of course neither very well acquainted with the cave itself, nor with the approved modes of averting or repairing accidents, to which, from the nature of their occupation, the miners were greatly exposed. Having been sent, one day, in charge of an older workman, to the Salts Room to dig a few sacks of the salt, and finding that the path to this sequestered nook was perfectly plain, and that, from the Haunted Chambers being a single, continuous passage, without branches, it was impossible to wander from it, our hero disdained, on his second visit, to seek or accept assistance, and trudged off to his work alone. The circumstance being common enough, he was speedily forgotten by his brother miners ; and it was not until several hours after, when they all left off their toil for the more agreeable duty of eating their dinner, that his absence was remarked, and his heroical resolution to make his way alone to the Salts Room remembered. As it was

apparent, from the time he had been gone that some accident must have happened him, half a dozen men, the most of them negroes, stripped half naked, their usual working costume, were sent to hunt him up, a task supposed to be of no great difficulty, unless he had fallen into a pit. In the mean while, the poor miner, it seems, had succeeded in reaching the Salts Room, filling his sack, and retracing his steps half way back to the Grand Gallery; when, finding the distance greater than he thought it ought to be, the conceit entered his unlucky brain that he might perhaps be going wrong. No sooner had the suspicion struck him, than he fell into a violent terror, dropped his sack, ran backwards, then returned, then ran back again, each time more frightened and bewildered than before; until at last he ended his adventures by tumbling over a stone and extinguishing his lamp. Thus left in the dark, not knowing where to turn, frightened out of his wits

besides, he fell to remembering his sins — always remembered by those who are lost in the Mammoth Cave — and praying with all his might for succour. But hours passed away, and assistance came not: the poor fellow's frenzy increased; he felt himself a doomed man, he thought his terrible situation was a judgment imposed on him for his wickedness; nay, he even believed, at last, that he was no longer an inhabitant of the earth — that he had been translated, even in the body, to the place of torment — in other words, that he was in hell itself, the prey of the devils, who would presently be let loose upon him. It was at this moment the miners in search of him made their appearance: they lighted upon his sack, lying where he had thrown it, and set up a great shout, which was the first intimation he had of their approach. He started up, and seeing them in the distance, the half-naked negroes in advance, all swinging their torches aloft, he, not doubting they

were those identical devils whose appearance he had been expecting, took to his heels, yelling lustily for mercy ; nor did he stop, notwithstanding the calls of his amazed friends, until he had fallen a second time among the rocks, where he lay on his face, roaring for pity, until, by dint of much pulling and shaking, he was convinced that he was still in the world and the Mammoth Cave. Such is the story they tell of the Haunted Chambers, the name having been given to commemorate the incident.

This Salts Room contains a pit, if we can so call a huge domed chamber below, communicating with it by means of a narrow crack in the floor. The floor is here very thin, in fact, a mere scale of rock, but, fortunately, rock of the most adamantine character. By lowering down torches, and peeping through the crack, one dimly discerns the chamber below. Its floor is at a depth of fifty feet, and is composed of firm and dry

sand or clay. It seems like the vestibule of a new set of chambers, which no one has yet explored. An attempt was made by our little party to examine it, by lowering the lightest individual of the company into the pit with ropes — an enterprise that was baffled, and had nearly produced a fatal termination, in consequence of the rope's parting, or beginning to part, at the moment when our adventurous explorer was hanging midway down the pit. With a good rope, however, nothing would be more easy than to reach the bottom in safety.

CHAPTER VII.

GRAND GALLERY CONTINUED—RUINED CAVE—STEAMBOAT
— DESERTED CHAMBERS — BOTTOMLESS PIT.

BUT let us resume our explorations in the Grand Gallery.

Three hundred yards beyond the mouth of the Haunted Chambers, proceeding along this wide, lofty, ever frowning, and ever majestic highway, on the brow of a hill, you perceive, on the left hand, a broad chasm reaching to the ceiling, its floor heaped with huge rocks: this is the Ruined or Rocky Cave, extending a distance of a hundred and fifty yards wide and high throughout, but its floor covered with blocks of stone of the most gigantic size,

some exceeding twenty feet in cubic dimensions, and weighing six hundred tons. In this cave, spread out upon the path, you find a relic of the ancient inhabitants of the place: it is an Indian mat of bark, — a cloak perhaps, or a part of one, for it is only a fragment about a yard square. It may have covered, in its day, the shoulders of a warrior of renown, or of a maiden, the pride and beauty of her clan; in which thought we will but look upon it, and pass it reverently by.

A hundred yards further on, the Grand Gallery makes a majestic sweep to the right. Just where the curve begins, you see, lying against the right-hand wall, a huge oblong rock, pointed at its further extremity like the prow of a ship. The Adam that gave names to the lions of the cave has christened this rock the Steamboat; and, it must be confessed, that it looks very much like a steamboat, only that wheels and wheel-houses are entirely wanting; not to speak of smoke-stacks and the

superstructure of cabins, pilot-boxes, and so on. It was some considerable period, — years, in fact, — after this Steamboat was observed reposing in her river of stone, before any curious person thought of peeping round her bows, to see what might be concealed behind them. The peep revealed an unanticipated mystery. A narrow but quite easy passage was discovered, leading into a circular room a hundred feet in diameter, with a low roof and broken floor, hollowed like a bowl, covered with sand and gravel, in which floor were two different holes or pits, leading to unknown chambers below. This room is the Vestibule of the Deserted Chambers, but more frequently called, in allusion to its figure, the Wooden Bowl. The holes, which are so small as only to admit one person to creep down them at a time, are called the Dog and Snake Holes, and are, in many respects, worthy of their names. By descending either of them to a depth of twenty or thirty feet, we find our-

selves at once in the Deserted Chambers, — to many the most impressive and terrific portion of the cave. Here the visiter, if he has not felt bewildered before, finds himself at last in a labyrinth, from which no sagacity or courage of his own could remove him, — a chaos of winding branches, once the beds of subterraneous torrents, — and he almost dreads, at each step, to see the banished floods come roaring upon him from some midnight chamber. Now he beholds great rocks, — mighty flakes scaling from the roof, — hanging over him, — in one place so low that he must stoop to pass under them, yet suspended to the roof only by an edge or a corner. What was the sword of Damocles to these treacherous traps, that would, any one of them, provided it should fall, smash a rhinoceros with as much ease as a basket of eggs? The ram of a pile-engine were a falling feather in comparison. Now he startles aghast, as hollow echoes under his feet bespeak the dismal

abyss from which he is separated only by a thin shell of floor. Now he stands trembling on the brink of a horrible chasm, down which the rock he has toppled goes crashing and rumbling to an immeasurable depth ; or now listens, with little less of awe, at the verge of another, in which, far down, he can hear the obscure dashings of a waterfall. Now he sits upon a crag, perhaps alone, — for if he would for once in his life feel what solitude is, (a thing man knows nothing of even in desert islands or the solitary cells of a prison,) here is the place to try the experiment, — with nameless passages yawning all around him, in a wilderness and desert such as his imagination never before dreamed of, reading such a lesson of his impotence and insignificance as not even the stars or the billows of the ocean can teach him. In short, the Deserted Chambers are terrific, chaotic, and not to be conceived of by those who have not seen them, — for which reason I will not attempt the

task of description. It may be observed, however, that they consist of three principal branches, one of which is nearly a mile long, another the third of a mile, the remaining one only three or four hundred yards; and that all three are full of pits, domes, and springs without number. The shortest branch contains three or four fearful pits. Over one of these, called the Sidesaddle Pit, projects a rock, affording a very comfortable seat to any visiter who chooses to peep into the den of darkness beneath, or the dome arching above it. Another, a well of fourteen or fifteen feet diameter, is covered by a thin plate of rock, lying on it like the cover of a pot, though a cover somewhat too small for the vessel, and seemingly supported only at one point. This is both a very curious and a very dangerous pit.

But the chief glory of this branch is the Bottomless Pit, so called, *par excellence*, and suspected by many to run pretty nearly

through the whole diameter of the earth. The branch terminates in it, and the explorer suddenly finds himself brought up on its brink, standing upon a projecting platform, surrounded on three sides by darkness and terror, a gulf on the right hand, a gulf on the left, and before him what seems an interminable void. He looks aloft; but no eye has yet reached the top of the great overarching dome; nothing is there seen but the flashing of water dropping from above, and smiling, as it shoots by, in the unwonted gleam of the lamps. He looks below, and nothing there meets his glance, save darkness as thick as lamp-black; but he hears a wild, mournful melody of waters, the wailing of the brook for the green and sunny channel left in the upper world, never more to be revisited. Truly, as we sit upon the brink listening, the complaining of those plaintive drops doth breathe a sad and woeful melancholy into our inmost spirits, a nostalgic longing for the bright and beautiful world we

have left behind us. Who could believe, in this dismal cave, that earth was otherwise than a paradise? that rogues and rascals made up a part of its population? No; our remembrance here is only of the good and pure, the just and gentle, the noble and the beautiful; those for whose society we may yearn with a pleasant sorrow, with tears as bright and pure as these falling drops, with sighs and murmurings as sweetly sad as these of the caverned fountain.

But sweetly sad they sound no more. Down goes a rock, tumbled over the cliff by the guide, who is of opinion that folks come hither to see and hear, not to muse and be melancholy. There it goes—crash; it has reached the bottom. No—hark! it strikes again; once more and again, still falling, still striking. Will it never stop? One's hair begins to bristle, as he hears the sound repeated, growing less and less, until the ear can follow it no longer. Certainly, if the Pit of Frederickshall

be eleven thousand feet deep, the Bottomless Pit of the Mammoth Cave must be its equal: for two minutes, at least, we can hear the stone descending.

But there is, it appears to me, something deceptive in this mode of estimating the depth of a pit. Mr. Lee sounded the pit in question with a line; and, bottomless though it be, found bottom at a depth of one hundred and seventy-three feet; though he supposed, as every one else who hurls stones into it will suppose, that his plummet had struck a shelf, the bottom of the pit being in reality a great many fathoms beneath. Nothing would be easier than to ascertain, by throwing stones into it, the depth of a pit of perpendicular descent, and having smooth continuous walls. But it must be remembered that all such cavities are very broken and ragged, with numberless shelves and other projections, on which have lodged stones and rubbish from

the mouldering walls above. A stone being cast into such a pit, if it be very deep, will naturally strike upon some shelf, from which it dislodges much of the rubbish, that falls with it to the bottom, each fragment making a louder or fainter noise, according to its weight ; and of these particles the smallest ones, which are those that make the least noise, will be the longest in rolling off their perch ; though of course, once off it, they will fall as rapidly as the others. Allowing that the bottom of the pit were but a few yards below the shelf, it will be easy to perceive that the sound of these dislodged particles, falling after the stone to the bottom, the heaviest first and the lightest last, would produce all the phenomena caused by a single stone dropping from ledge to ledge for a long time, and consequently through a great depth. There is, and indeed can be, no certainty except in the line and plummet.

A few hundred feet back from this Bot-

tomless Pit, is a narrow chasm, called the Covered Way, which, on being followed, is found to terminate in the *side* of the pit, fifty feet below the platform ; which is perhaps as great a depth into the pit as any visiter will ever choose to venture.

CHAPTER VIII.

**GRAND GALLERY CONTINUED—CROSS ROOMS—CHIMNEYS
—BLACK CHAMBERS—BEWILDERED VISITERS—THE
CATARACTS—SOLITARY CAVE—AN INCIDENT.**

RETURNING again to the Grand Gallery, and pursuing the majestic curve it makes at the place of the Steamboat, we find it presently taking another and more abrupt sweep to the left, still wide, lofty, and impressive. In the angle here made, we see the opening into another cave,—the Sick Room,—which running back, and under the Haunted Chambers, terminates at last under the Grand Gallery near the Church, where was originally another outlet, now covered over with rubbish.

The visiter has now before him a walk of a thousand yards; which having accomplished, he will perhaps lay aside his enthusiasm for a moment, to wonder how he is ever to get back again. Throughout the whole of this distance, the floor of the cave is strewn over with loose rocks,—flakes from the ceiling and crags from the wall,—of all imaginable sizes and shapes, over which the labour of trudging, at least at the pace the guide holds most agreeable, is inconceivably great; while a certain natural anxiety to avoid tumbling into the numberless gaps betwixt the huge rough blocks, and to step upon the slabs, which eternally see-saw under your feet, precisely at the point that will enable you to preserve your equilibrium, adds greatly to your distresses; while, at the same time, it prevents your taking any note of the grandeur around, except when the guide occasionally pauses to point out some remarkable object,—the Keel-boat, (a tremendous rock sixty or

seventy feet long, fifteen wide, and depth unknown,) — the Devil's Looking-glass, (which is a huge plate of stone standing erect,) — the Snow Room, (where even a lusty halloo brings down from the ceiling a shower of saline flakes, as white and beautiful almost as those of snow itself,) — and other such curiosities. In another visit, he will perhaps show you what you did not before suspect, that you have passed many different openings in the left wall, running into caves called the Side Cuts, in consequence of all of them winding back again into the Grand Gallery. In one of them is a perforation, — the Black Hole, — leading into the Deserted Chambers, forming the third entrance to those wild and dreary vaults. Throughout the whole of this space of a thousand yards, the Grand Gallery is worthy of its name, being uniformly of the grandest dimensions and aspect. In two places, the rocks covering the floor are of such vast size, and lie heaped in such

singular confusion, that fancy has traced in them a resemblance to the ruins of demolished cities, Troglodytic Luxors and Palmyras; and they bear the names of the First and Second Cities.

But we have accomplished the thousand yards — the guide pauses to give us rest; we have reached a new region, we look upon a new spectacle; we are in the Cross Rooms, (so called,) at the entrance of the Black Chambers. A wilder, sublimer scene, imagination could scarcely paint; even Martin might here take a lesson in the grand and terrible. The Grand Gallery, previously contracted, in a short bend, to a width of thirty or forty feet, suddenly expands to the width of more than a hundred, which it preserves throughout a length of five hundred feet. Midway of this noble hall, on the left hand, running at right angles with it, is seen another apartment, a hundred and fifty feet wide, and measuring from its opening, more

than two hundred long; or, if we add to it the width of the Grand Gallery, three hundred feet long; the two rooms thus uniting into one in the shape of the letter T. The whole of this prodigious area is strewn with rocks of enormous size, tumbled together in a manner that cannot be described, and looking, especially in the transeptal portion, where confusion is by them worse confounded, like the ruins of some old castle of the Demi-gods, too ponderous to stand, yet too massive to decay. This apartment is bounded, or rather divided, at what seems its end, by ragged cliffs forming a kind of very large island, into two branches, through both of which, clambering aloft among the rugged blocks and up two crannies, called the Chimneys, very irregular and bewildering, you can penetrate into the Black Chambers above. The whole extent of these chambers, which are black and dismal, as their name denotes, does not exceed six or seven hundred

yards; and there is nothing in them, though they contain several domes arched over mountains of fallen sandstone, with a few stalactites and clusters of crystals here and there, to compare in interest with their entrance. The greatest curiosities, perhaps, are four or five piles of stones looking like rude altars, and so denominated, left thus heaped up by the Autochthones of the cave, though for what purpose it is difficult to imagine.

The entrance into these Black Chambers by the Chimneys, however narrow and contorted they may be, is not very difficult; but the exit is quite another matter. There are as many chaotic rocks around the tops of the Chimneys in the chambers above as at the bottom, and it is sometimes no easy task to find them; the more particularly as there are dozens of other holes exactly like them, though leading to nothing. Even the guides themselves are sometimes for a moment at

fault. Some years since two young gentlemen of the West were conducted into the Black Chambers, whence, in due course of time, they proposed to return to the Grand Gallery; a feat, however, as they soon discovered to their horror, which it was much easier to propose than perform. The guide, who happened not to be very familiar with this branch of the cave, looked and looked in vain for the Chimneys. Not one could he find. He began to think that while he had been with the party at the extreme verge of the Chambers, the rocks must have fallen down, and sealed up the two passages. Here was a situation, and soon there was a scene. The young gentlemen became frantic; and, declaring they would sooner die on the spot than endure their horrible imprisonment longer, condemned to agonize out existence by inches, they drew their pistols,—with which, like true American travellers, they were both well provided,—resolving at once to end the

catastrophe. The only difficulty was a question that occurred, whether each should do execution upon himself by blowing his own brains out, or whether, devoted to friendship even in death, each should do that office for the other. Fortunately, before the difficulty was settled, the guide stumbled upon one of the Chimneys, and blood and gunpowder were both saved.

The danger of being entrapped in these dens is perhaps as great as ever ; but such an accident can only happen where the guide, besides being inexperienced, is of a temper to take alarm, or become confused at an unexpected difficulty. In all intricate passages throughout the cave, and in many that are not intricate, the rocks are marked with broad arrows pointing the way out. A piece of chalk—or, to be correct, of decomposing limestone—caught up along the way, makes an intelligible record on the black rocks of the path ; and explorers at first, and after

them super-philanthropic visitors, have taken care that these marks shall be in abundance. The rocks at the Chimneys have their share of arrows, and a man with good eyes and a philosophic temperament will find little difficulty in making his way in and out.

In the right-hand wall of the Grand Gallery, directly opposite the Black Chambers, is the opening of another vault, (whence the name of Cross Rooms,) called Fox's Hall. It runs backward, and after a course of four or five hundred feet, returns to the Grand Gallery.

From the Black Chambers to what may be properly considered the termination of the Grand Gallery, is a distance of only two or three hundred yards. During a part of this space, the path is very narrow, running between rudely piled but high walls of loose stones, thrown up by the ancient inhabitants for a purpose they doubtless understood themselves, though it will not seem very obvious

to the modern visiter. The passage, however, soon widens again ; and presently we hear the far-off murmur of a waterfall, whose wild pattering sound, like that of heavy rain, but modified almost to music by the ringing echoes of the cave, grows louder as we approach, and guides us to the end of the Grand Gallery. We find ourselves on the verge of a steep stony descent, a hollow running across the cave from right to left, bounded on the further side by a solid wall extending from the bottom of the descent up to the roof, in which it is lost. In the roof, at the right-hand corner, are several perforations as big as hogsheads, from which water is ever falling—on ordinary occasions in no great quantities, but after heavy rains in torrents, and with a horrible roar that shakes the walls, and resounds afar through the cave. It is at such times that these cascades are worthy the name of Cataracts, which they bear. The water falling into the hollow below, immediately van-

ishes among the rocks. In fact, this hollow is the mouth of a great pit, loosely filled in with stones, which have not even the merit of being lodged securely. A huge mass of rocks fell, some years ago, from the little domes of the cataracts, almost filling that corner of the hollow; but they speedily crushed their way down to the original level. On another occasion, some visitors tumbling a big rock into the hollow on the left hand, the crash set all below in commotion, causing a considerable sinking in that quarter.

Over this portion of the hollow—that is, on the left hand—high up in the wall that bounds the passage, the visiter dimly discerns an opening, behind which, listening attentively, he can hear the pattering of another cascade. Descending into the hollow, and clambering up a mound of stones, by way of ladder, we make our way into this opening, the Garret-hole, and find ourselves between two hollows, the one we have just crossed, and a second, form-

ing part of a concealed chamber of no great extent, into which, from a barrel-like dome above, falls the second cataract. Opposite to this second cataract, at the bottom of the wall, (which is, however, some twelve or fifteen feet above the bottom of the hollow,) is a horizontal fissure, ten or fifteen feet wide, but so low as only to permit a man lying flat on his face to enter it. But through that narrow fissure,—the Humble Chute,—and in that grovelling position, we must pass, if we would visit the Solitary Cave; a branch only discovered within a few years. Indeed, if we can believe the guide, our little party was the first that ever entered it; for though the fissure had been often observed, and it was thought might lead to a new branch, neither himself nor any other individual had ever attempted to crawl through it. It is, in truth, somewhat of awe-inspiring appearance, looking like one of Milton's

“ Rifted rocks, whose entrance leads to hell,”

h we discovered, to our great satisfaction,
t led to quite another place.

wling along on our faces for a hundred
r more, we found ourselves at last in
omfortable quarters, in a cave neither
ide nor high, nor indeed extensive; the
t length of the main passage not ex-
seven hundred yards, but curious for
as and grotesque figures worn in the
y water, and for its recent stalactites,
h there is quite a grove in the cham-
ed the Fairy Grotto. The Island, or

Castle, as it is more poetically called,
y curious rock, supporting the roof in
of a pier, but excavated through and
in several directions, so as to make a
om, in which you may sit at ease, look-
into the cave by sundry wide window-
ces in its walls. From the main pas-
a several narrower branches, some of
ve not yet been explored. In one of

them was found a kind of nest composed of sticks, moss, and leaves, with, I believe, a walnut or two in it, supposed to be a rat's nest, floated thither from some unknown higher branch; and in another passage was found a tooth resembling a beaver's. In one of the passages, called the Coral-grove Branch, is a deep pit, suspected, upon pretty strong grounds, to have some underhand kind of communication with the cataracts, which are at no great distance; and, indeed, from an occurrence that happened some few months after the discovery of the Solitary Cave, this communication can hardly be questioned. One of the younger guides, at the time mentioned, had conducted a visiter into the Solitary Cave, where they employed themselves looking for new branches at its extremity. It was a winter's day, very stormy, and rain was falling when they entered the cave. The cataracts were found pouring down water rather more freely than usual, but not in quantities to ex-

ny alarm; and they crawled through the
le Chute, and to the farthest recesses of
ranch, without giving them a thought.
se remote vaults, as indeed in all others
hout the cave, except in the immediate
of falling water, a death-like silence
ially reigns: of course, a sound of any
occurring immediately attracts attention,
es not cause dismay. I can well re-
the thrilling effect produced upon
and companions, when first exploring
itary Cave, by a low, hollow, but very
sound we heard once or twice repeated,
e supposed was caused by the falling
in chambers far beneath,—a phenome-
ever, as it seems, of very rare occur-
The visiter and his guide, of whom I
ere startled from their tranquillity by
formidable noise,—a sudden rumbling
ing, distant indeed, but loud enough
ce consternation. They retraced their
rapidly as they could; the noise in-

creased as they advanced ; and by and by, when they reached the mouth of the Coral-grove Branch, which is two hundred yards from the Humble Chute, they found it full of water, and pouring out a flood into the Solitary Cave, here at its lowest level. They hurried by, astounded and affrighted, yet rejoiced to find the water was not rushing into the cave through the Humble Chute, which would have effectually cut off their escape. It was no longer to be doubted that a torrent, a result of the rains, was now pouring down the cataracts, especially the second one, immediately opposite the outlet of the Humble Chute ; its terrific din made that more than evident ; and it was questioned whether the body of falling water might not fill the narrow passage into which the Solitary Cave opens, and so prevent their further retreat. But the occasion was pressing ; time was too precious to be wasted in hesitation. The guide crept up the Chute, and reached its outlet, where he was saluted

A flood of spray that immediately extinguished his torch. He perceived, however, the path was still open to the Garret-hole, and, if he could reach, there was little fear of himself and companion dying the death of drowned rats. His torch proving insufficient to resist the spray and eddies of air caused by the cascade, he crept a little back into the grotto, where he manfully substituted his shirt for the torch; and with that flaming in his hands, making a gallant rush, he succeeded in reaching the Garret Hole; whence, lighting his torch again, it was afterwards not very difficult to assist in extricating his companion. The Solitary Cave was visited again a few days after; the floods had then entirely subsided, and the cataracts dwindled to their former insignificance, leaving no vestige of the late scene of disorder and terror.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHIEF CITY — ITS MEMORIALS — DARKNESS —
CAPTAIN B——.

STANDING again upon the verge of the declivity of the first cataract, facing toward the mouth of the cave, we perceive, on the right hand, a wide and lofty passage running from the Grand Gallery, which we did not before notice. This is commonly considered as a continuation of the Grand Gallery, or Main Cave, and may be followed for a distance of fifteen hundred yards — nearly a mile. Half a mile from its entrance at the cataracts, it is crossed by another wide cave, the right and left hand branches of which are each half a mile long, and called respec-

Symmes's Pit Branch, and the Branch
e Blue Spring. Each has its curiosities
its interest. The end of the former is
arthest point from daylight yet reached
e Mammoth Cave, being but a few
short of two miles and a half. The
om which it takes its name is of un-
depth, and peculiarly dangerous to
ach ; its funnel-shaped mouth being
with loose rocks, that, at a touch of the
oll into the chasm : it is such a trap as
n-spider digs in the sand for his unwary
which a single false step slides headlong
s expanded jaws.

these branches it is not my intention
; the reader ; it is sufficient if he will
me six or seven hundred yards into
in Cave. Throughout this distance, the
still rugged ; the path runs over fallen
at rock and clatter under our feet with
t din—in some places to such a degree
ve gained for certain long but not lofty

mounds over which we must pass the name of the Clattering Hills.

But to what a chamber this wearisome and painful road conducts us ! We have expended our breath, our epithets, our enthusiasm, upon the smaller glories of the Vestibule and the Hall of the Black Chambers, and we have nothing left wherewith to paint the vast vault into which we have now found our way. Yet with even a wilderness of fine words at command, I doubt whether I could convey an adequate idea of the scene, or of the impressions it produces on a spectator's mind. If the reader will fancy an oval room, extremely regular in figure, of the enormous dimensions of one hundred and fifty yards in length, by eighty yards wide, (*feet* are here too trifling for our purpose,) crowned by a dome one hundred and twenty feet high, and of an oval shape, corresponding throughout with the figure of the room, he will have a better idea of the den and its horrible grandeur than

be conveyed by the most laboured description. On the floor, which is actually two in area, lies a mountain of great rocks—from the dome, and reposing chiefly to the left wall. From this mountain—of ruins such as we have seen in the Gallery—the chamber derives its name Chief City—a name that I infinitely prefer to the trivial one of the Temple, under which figures in Mr. Lee's map. The great dome is of a peculiar and striking appearance, being formed by the giving way, one above the other, of the great horizontal strata, the perforation of each in the ascending being less in dimensions than that in the one immediately below, until the top of the place of a lantern, is closed by a flat, symmetrically cut and placed with the vertical axis of the chamber. This dome, as Mr. Lee justly observes, “in passing through, from one end to the other, you follow, like the sky, in passing from

place to place on the earth." From its height, it could not be otherwise.

It must not be supposed that all the vast dimensions of this prodigious chamber can be embraced by the eye at once. The darkness of the rock of which all is composed, not to speak of the boundless extent of the chamber, forbids that. It is only by ascending the mountain, collecting the pieces of cane—remnants of old Indian torches—and building fires with them, that we can see any thing, except a few yards of rocky floor around us ; all else is the void of darkness. When the fires are in flame, the torches all freshly trimmed, we can, from the top of the mountain, discern, dimly it must be confessed, the dome above us and the opposite wall ; but the ends of the chamber are still veiled in midnight. It is only when a guide and a companion are placed one at each end, with their torches, that the whole immensity of the scene begins to break upon our minds.

on this mountain we will end our jour-

It is a favourite place with visitors, and a favourite with the Indian inhabitants of

The interstices of the rocks, from top to bottom, are full of the half-burnt remnants of cane torches: you may, in any place, dig, in five minutes, fragments enough to kindle a fire. Hundreds—I might almost say thousands—of fires have been already built by the Indians; but the supply of fuel seems yet inexhaustible. The presence of these canes—grown on the river banks near—in such astonishing quantities, is what remains to prove in what favour the Indians held the ruins of the Chief City. The remains of the pale-faced race have left still many surprising proofs of their regard. The crevices of the wall, at the top of the mountain, are stuck full of written papers, in which every full-hearted personage has acquainted Mammoth Cave with the state of their affairs. Here a confiding, and, I doubt

not, youthful personage, who signs his name in full—it may be Charles Henry Tender, or Allheart, or any thing else—assures Miss Lavina Small,—Peabody,—or Pettibones, that he visited the Mammoth Cave at such a date, and that he adores her, and will continue to do so as long as the rocks hold together; there another son of soul, who writes a good hand, somewhat the worse for bad paper and mouldered ink, and spells nothing aright except his own name, proclaims that he was educated at such a college, declaring that he will hold his Alma Mater in honour and affection, and also Miss Angelina B——, diffidently leaving *her* name to be guessed at; then comes another edition of Mr. Tender and Miss Small, under other names, and then another, and another without end—memorials of fond hearts and foolish heads.

From these frank confessions, whispered in pen and ink into the rocky ears of the Mammoth Cave, and the representations of the

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guides, there seems to be every reason to believe that the Mammoth Cave — and particularly the Chief City thereof — has a wonderful effect in awakening the tender passions; a phenomenon which, however interesting it might be to discuss, I must leave to be solved by the philosophers. I felt somewhat of an inclination, at the first peep into them, to pocket a brace or two of these precious records; but they were secrets breathed in the confessional—offerings made to the benign (so we must conceive him) genius of the cave; and I returned them to their places, to rot and moulder, as perhaps have already done some of the idle hands that traced them.

In the Deserted Chambers we made an effort, and a successful one, to find out what *solitude* was. Let us, in this fearful vault, upon this mound of rocks, two miles away from the blessed light of heaven, prove what is *darkness*; — a thing, I devoutly believe, quite as little known in the outer world even

as solitude. Let us blow out our torches. What should we fear? We have our pockets full of Lucifers, and “can again our former lights restore,” whenever it repents us. What, indeed, *can* we fear? Man is not with us: we are alone with God. Is darkness so very terrible?

“He that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i’ the centre, and enjoy bright day.”

Puff, puff, puff,—it is done; the torches are out, and now we are indeed in darkness. Ah! that those who dream that Heaven, in visiting them with a little affliction, a little desolation, a little gloom—the darkest that was ever infused into the sparkling dew-drop of life—has quenched the light of hope and happiness, leaving the spirit in midnight, should sit with us upon this rock, and say if such darkness as *this* ever lay even for a moment upon the mind! Never: such darkness were annihilation. It is awful. The atmosphere is a rock, palpable and solid as the limestone walls

und; the very air seems petrified — condensed into a stratum of coal, in which we encased like toads or insects — fossils — ing fossils. Such it is to us—to man; all use skill, exhausted in the most ingenious devices, could not collect from it light enough to see his own fingers. Yet the bat flutters at ease; and the rat, which has no such organization as his airy cousin, or as a *somnambule* from the digits of an animal-netizer — creatures, as we all know—the and the *somnambule* — that see through bodies, or rather, see by instinct, without the intervention of visual apparatus of kind — the rat scampers over the rocks with equal facility and confidence; and, doubtless if a cat were here, she also would find light enough to make a bold dash at his ratship. Here we are in gloom—gloom unparalleled by anything in the world. Truly, indeed, man knows nothing about darkness *there* — alas! but those to whose eyes Heaven has

denied the blessing of light altogether. The *blind* see such darkness; and here we can learn (for during a period we can feel it) the depth and misery of the privation.

And now, while thus sitting in gloom ineffable, a secret dread (notwithstanding the actual assurance we possess of security) stealing through our spirits, we can understand and appreciate the horror of mind which inevitably seizes upon men lost in caves, and deprived of their lights; even when their reason — if they could listen to that ever ill-used counsellor, the victim and football of every fitful passion — tells them that their situation is not wholly desperate. Although no fatal accident has ever happened in the Mammoth Cave, men have been frequently lost in it; or, at least, have lost their lights, and so been left imprisoned in darkness. In such a case, as proceeding in any direction in the dark is quite out of the question, all that is to be done is to sit patiently down,

waiting until relief comes from without; which will happen as soon as the persons outside have reason, from your unusual stay, to suspect that some such catastrophe has occurred. And, his every body who enters the cave knows well enough, and none better than the guides; and, one would suppose, such knowledge would always, in case of accident, preserve them from unmanly terror. The case is, however,

numerous examples prove, quite otherwise; guide and visiter, the bold man and the timid, yield alike to apprehension, give over all as lost, and pass the period of imprisonment in lamentations and prayers. It is astonishing, indeed, how vastly devout these men, who were never devout before, become, when thus lost in the cave; though, it might be suspected, the fit of devotion is no longer of longer duration than the time of imprisonment:

When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;—
When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he,—

applies very well to the history of cave conversions. I had the good fortune, when on my way to the Mammoth Cave some years ago, in a certain city of the South-West, to stumble upon a worthy gentleman, who, among his many virtues, public and private, was not supposed to lay any particular claim to religious devotion; or if he did, took no great pains to make it evident: on the contrary, I heard it very energetically averred by one who was a proficient in the same accomplishment, that "Captain B—— could swear harder than any other man on the Mississippi."

The Captain, ascertaining whither we were directing our footsteps, congratulated us upon the pleasures we had in store, and concluded by informing us that he had visited the Mammoth Cave himself, and, with his guide, had been lost in it, remaining in this condition and in the dark, for eight or nine hours. "Dreadful!" my friend and self both

imed: "what did you do?" "Do!" replied the Captain, with the gravity of a philosopher; "all that we could;—as soon as lights went out, we sat down upon a and waited until the people came in hunted us up." We admired the Captain's courage, and went on our way, until we had arrived within two miles of the Mammoth Cave; when a thunder-shower drove us to seek shelter in a cabin on the way-side.

There we found a man who had been born and bred, and lived all his life, within so short distance of the cave, without having ever entered it: in excuse of which unpardonable idleness, he told us, "he had a brother who had been in it often enough," had sometimes acted as guide, and had once even been in it. "He was along with a gentleman who was guiding—Captain B——: perhaps you know Captain B——?" said our host, "Captain B—— of ——. Well, he was the gentleman with my brother; they

lost their lights, and were kept fast in the desperate hole for nine hours — awfully frightened, too.” “What! Captain B—— frightened?” “Just as much as my brother: I have heard my brother tell the story over a hundred times. They got to praying, both of ’em, as loud as they could; and my brother says, the Captain made some of the most beautiful prayers he ever heard in his life! and he reckons, if the Captain would take to it, he’d make a rare tear-cat of a preacher!”—O philosophy! how potent thou art in an arm-chair, or at the dinner table!

But we have been long enough in darkness, long enough even in the cave. We relight our torches, we bid farewell to the Hall of the Chief City, and returning to the Grand Gallery, retrace the long path that leads us back to daylight.

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CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

Mammoth Cave possesses few features of interest for a geologist or naturalist. It is considered a great crack opened in the bed of limestone by some convulsion, or a series of convulsions, which have left it in places in its original condition, while in other parts it has been worn and altered by the action of floods that have swept into it sand, silt, and clay ; while, also, the infiltration of water from above has here and there destroyed the calcareous crust, and exposed the substratum of sandstone. The earthquakes, which have left their visible devastations in

every part of the cave, must, however, have been a thousand times more violent than those of modern days. Many shocks—the concussions that succeeded the great New Madrid earthquake of 1811—were experienced by the nitre-diggers, while at work in the cave; but, though sorely frightened on each occasion, they never saw a single rock shaken from the roof or walls. The rock contains no fossils, or none that we could discover, though shells abound in the limestone in the vicinity. No fossil bones have been discovered. Human bones in a recent condition were dug up near the entrance; but no mummies were found. The mummy in one of the public museums, said to be from the Mammoth Cave, was taken, we were told, from a cave in the neighbourhood,—we believe the Pit Cave,—though deposited for a while in the Mammoth Cave for exhibition. There are vast numbers of rats in the cave, though we never could get sight of any of them. What they can find to live on

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ell be wondered at. In winter, the roof cave, as far in at least as the Black ers, where we found them in numbers, dotted over with bats. In the low and branches there may frequently be seen, ng along over roof and floor, an insect ong cricket-like legs, and body like a and a smaller insect, somewhat like 'strange bedfellow' with which misery us acquainted, may be sometimes disco-

ve frequently had occasion to speak of adians, the original *inhabitants* of the and, indeed, this is to me one of the interesting subjects connected with the moth Cave. I use the word *inhabitants*; ere visitors, unless the cave was in its uch more of a lion among the savage en than it is now even among their white sors, could never have left behind them ny vestiges. We have seen what vast ties of broken half-burnt canes lie among

the rocks of the Chief City. They are scattered in other parts of the cave,—I might say throughout the whole extent of the Grand Gallery,—in nearly equal profusion. These, there can be little doubt, are the remains of torches, in some cases of fires; for which former purpose they were tied together with strips of young hickory bark into little faggots. Such faggots are still occasionally picked up half-consumed, the thongs still around them. Besides, there have been discovered stone arrow-heads, axes, and hammers, and pieces of pottery, with moccasins, blankets of woven bark, and other Indian valuables; in short, evidence sufficient to prove that these occidental Troglydites actually *lived* in the cave. No mere visitors would have taken the trouble to build the walls in the Grand Gallery near the Cataracts; much less to clear away the rocks from the floor of the Blue-Spring Branch, as we find has been done, so as to make a good path on the sand beneath. There are in several branches

where the walls have been picked and with stone-hammers, for what purpose we can tell; in others, rocks heaped up into mounds and the earth separated,—the object of the labour, as we cannot suppose the Indians dig villanous saltpetre, being equally obvious, neither of which could have been the temporary visitants. Nor could such men have made themselves so thoroughly acquainted with the cave, into every nook of which they seem to have penetrated, leaving impressions of their moccasins and naked feet in the mud and clay of the low branches, and impressions of their cane-torches in the upper parts. Even in the Solitary Cave, previously unvisited to the guides, we found in one place the impression of a naked foot. One would think that our fellows had even entered some of the most secret recesses; as there are long ropes, or withes of any bark, sometimes found, which look as if they might have been prepared for such use. At all events, it is quite plain

that the Mammoth Cave was once the dwelling-place of man — of a race of the Anakim, as some will have it, whose bones were disinterred in the Vestibule; or, as common-sense personages may believe, of a tribe of the common family of Red-men, who, in ages not very remote, occupied all the fertile valleys along the rivers of Kentucky. Some such clan, I suppose, dwelt on Green River, at Cave Hollow, using the Mammoth Cave as a kind of winter-wigwam, and — a more common use of caves among Indians — a burial place. The tribe has vanished, and their bones, (to what base uses we may return!) converted into gunpowder, have been employed to wing many a death against their warring descendants.

But of Indians, charnels, and caves no more: we have reached the confines of day; yonder it shines upon us afar, a twinkling planet, which increases as we advance, changing from pallid silver to flaming gold. It is

am of sunset playing upon the grass
sses at the mouth of the cave.

World, World! he knows not thy love-
who has not lived a day in the Mam-
ave!

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COLONEL STORM;

OR,

THE BROAD-HORN.

CHAPTER I.

WESTERN STEAMBOATS—THE OHIO RIVER.

frequency and dreadful character of
 by steam on the Western waters,
 among other effects, very generally in-
 the good people of the East to regard
 or Mississippi steamboat as nothing
 than a floating man-trap — a loco-
 moto, on which Western ladies and

gentlemen take their seats for the purpose of being blown into eternity.

After forming such a conception, and drawing in his mind a suitable picture of the infernal machine, in which he is to take his chance of a visit to the other world — a picture of some clumsily constructed hulk, painted over with flames and fiery devils, like the *San-benito* of a prisoner of the Inquisition, perhaps, also, begrimed with the blood of former victims — the traveller is somewhat astonished to find himself in a stately and splendidly appointed barge, that might have served the need of Cleopatra herself, and which will certainly vie with, if it does not entirely surpass in magnificence, the finest steamers he has ever floated in, in any other part of the world. His astonishment will increase, when, searching out the commander, whom he expects to discover picking his teeth with a bowie-knife, or drinking grog out of a barrel, he lights upon a very well-behaved

ompanionable personage, who does the
rs of his vessel with all courtesy, and
as he never yet blew up a boat, and
even races, unless when his passengers
larly request it; when he finds the
er oiling his pump-rods, instead of
g down the safety-valve; and the
ndustriously sighting his distances, in-
f shooting down strangers on the shore.
rt, after making many more equally
ng discoveries, he will at last come to
clusion that the occurrence of accidents
at many Western steamboats does not
ily imply that accidents must, or even
ppen in all; and that he is, perhaps,
and has as good reason to enjoy him-
ring his voyage, as if caged in the
“low-pressure” on the Delaware.

a man discovers that he may enjoy
it is a very common consequence that
lo so. And it is my impression, con-
y repeated enterprises in those for-

midable vessels, that a man may enjoy himself to as great, if not to greater advantage, in a Western steamboat, than in any other in the land. One chief reason of this is the length of the voyage one commonly takes in the Western boat, whereby travellers have time to turn about them, to strike up friendships with one another, and make the acquaintance of the captain and officers, from whom they may thus glean wayside anecdotes and information, not to be gained in shorter trips. Another reason is the general frankness of manners which, a characteristic of the West, all men seem naturally to fall into the moment they reach the West. But perhaps the greatest reason of all will be found in the peculiar structure of the Western boat, which is so planned as to compel travellers to congregate together in little squads or knots, instead of in one great multitude, whereby sociableness is in a manner forced upon them. There is in her no great

ing-place, like the quarter-deck of an steamboat, where passengers huddle upon benches, to stare each other and bashfully in the face ; but a great of smaller retiring places — the boiler-room, the social hall, and, above all, the saloon, in which little groups of men, accustoming themselves, find no difficulty in forming themselves into agreeable parties.

I were to add, that the fact of there being a place of convocation in a Western saloon, as equally free to the ladies as to the gentlemen, may be another great reason why men so easily enjoy themselves, I do not think I should be guilty of a libel upon them. The truth is, that men in America, especially in the West, are so egregiously full of respect for womankind, and carry their courtesy to such excess of painful respect, as to embarrass both themselves and the fair objects of their reverence, so that they reciprocate as dampers upon each other ; and

I believe, upon observation, that they are, in general, after being a few moments together, in any general place of assemblage, as happy to fly each other, as schoolboys to escape a good aunt who has been stuffing them with excellent advice, instead of sugar-plums.

Of the voyage on the Mississippi I have spoken in another place. The voyage on the Ohio is infinitely more agreeable, *La Belle Rivière* being rich in all those charms of bold and varied scenery, of which the Father Water is almost entirely destitute. One is not here oppressed by a continual succession of willows and cottonwoods springing from swampy islands and quagmire shores, and a horizon so low as to be ever concealed from the eye. Beautiful hills, springing here from the margin of the tide, there rising beyond cultivated fields or gleaming towns, track the course of the Ohio from its springs to its mouth ; and high bluffs, crowned with ma-

planes, shingled beaches, and lovely
s, changing and shifting in myrioramic
ion, present an ever-changing series of
acts, of strongly marked foregrounds
ed against blue distances, so dear to
yes of painters and lovers of the pic-
ue.

l to this, that the Ohio has its storied
, its places of renown, its points to
we can attach the memories of other
and we may imagine what pleasure
the voyager on its bosom, who has
succeeded, as, in general, he will very
do, in throwing aside all fears, and
its of half-burned boilers and despe-
weighted safety-valves.

my own part, I can say that in no
of the United States do I always more
ently expect, or more uniformly expe-
, the enjoyment of a steam excursion,
on the upper Ohio; and I hold a trip,
: dull season — that is, when the vessels

are not over-crowded with passengers — in a neat little summer boat — if a slow one, so much the better — with a pleasant captain, a civilized cook, and good-humoured companions — whether the voyage be up or down — as one of the most agreeable expeditions that can well be taken.

On such an occasion, one is pretty sure of finding companions both able and willing to talk — men who possess in an uncommon degree the intelligence and powers of conversation so general in the West, who know every man and thing in, and appertaining to, their own states or districts, and every local history and anecdote which a curious person might desire to hear. One may even light, at such times, upon an old pioneer and founder of the West, an original colonist of Kentucky, or Ohio, a contemporary, perhaps, of Boone and Clark, who, solicited by his junior fellow-travellers, and warmed as much by their interest in his conversation, as by his

stirring recollections, can speak of the
of the border, of the times and scenes
ried men's souls, and pour a stream of
story, the fresher and more delightful
s hearers for being thus drunk at the
ain-head.

was once my fortune, on such a voyage,
et such a story-teller, a venerable old man,
was acquainted with every point of note
e river, and had descended it more than
years before, performing a voyage which
that period, always dangerous—was, in
case, attended with circumstances pecu-
/ perilous and dreadful. His story, inte-
ng in itself, had, moreover, the additional
t of being told upon the place of its occur-
e, upon the river whose waters had been
l with his own blood and the blood of
y a hapless companion, and at the very
: which had witnessed its fearful cata-
phe. It was a tale strongly illustrative,
with but few exaggerative features of the

earlier navigation of the Ohio, when the unwieldy flat-boat, or *broad-horn*, took the place of the steamer; when men inexperienced in navigation, and entirely unacquainted with the river upon which they so boldly launched, were the only sailors and pilots; and when, above all, the river-banks were lined with Indians, lying in wait to plunder and murder.

It was a fine evening of early October, 183—; the beautiful hills, forest-clad to the top, had put on their glorious mantles of gold and scarlet; the clumps of trees on the shores and islands, — some half bared of leaves, displaying the tufts of green mistletoe on their branches, and the purple ivies draping their pillared trunks, some still in full leaf and glowing, here like a sunshiny cloud, and there like a hillock of cinnabar — glassed themselves in a tide as smooth and bright as quicksilver, in which their reflections, and the images of bank and hill, were as clear and distinct to the vision as the objects themselves; so that

seemed to be rather sailing down a river of
than any grosser element.

It was an hour when — every one having
finished his supper—travellers felt sentimental
and philosophic, and dragged their chairs to
the boiler-deck; where — with the consciousness
that all had, that, in case of a boiler bursting,
they were in the best place in the boat to be
reduced to atoms—each surveyed the Eden-like
scenery continually arising, admired, com-
mented, and prepared his store of anecdote,
to take part in the story-telling conversation,
which always formed the entertainment of the
evening.

It was at this period that the old gentleman,
(Law, he said, was his name,) who had
on previous occasions narrated many interest-
ing anecdotes of other persons, without doing
more than hint at his own adventures, was
called upon to speak of himself, of his own
life's history; which he did with such un-
common effect, at least so far as regarded

myself, that I was never easy afterward until I had fully committed his story to writing. I have only to regret that I did not obtain for it, as thus faithfully recorded, the proper evidence of authenticity; that is, a certificate of its accuracy by the narrator, under his own hand and seal; which would have settled the doubts of all such sceptical persons as may be disposed to regard it as a fiction and coinage of my own imagination.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH MR. MICHAEL LAW BEGINS HIS STORY: WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF COLONEL STORM AND HIS FAMILY.

“HAD Fulton and Stevens, and the other men who have covered the rivers of America with steamboats,” — thus began the story, — “commenced their experiments many years earlier than they did, the history of the West would have presented no such scenes of blood as I am now about to relate, and civilization would have advanced with equal rapidity and safety. With a steamboat on the river to waft us, the first invaders of the wilderness, upon our voyage, instead of the lumbering broad-horns in which so many of us

went to our deaths, the voyage to Kentucky would have presented none of those dangers and difficulties by which colonization was so seriously retarded, and the rich fields of the West left so long in possession of the savage red man.

“ I was born in Virginia, in what is now Jefferson county, on the Upper Potomac,—an honourable birth-place; but I cannot boast a lineage either rich or distinguished. On the contrary, I found myself, at the age of eighteen, in the month of March, 1791 an ignorant youngster, (ignorant of every thing but the rifle, which I had learned to handle in hunter’s style by mere instinct, and the hoe, the use of which noble implement starvation and a hard-labouring father had as early taught me,) set adrift upon the world, to seek my fortune, or, in other words, shift for myself as I could; my father, Michael Law, (which is also my own name,) having brought home to his cabin, one fine morning, a new

id in the person of a step-mother, who never at rest until she had succeeded in ing me from the house; a catastrophe to ch my father the more readily consented, [was now, he said, 'a man grown, and as able to make my way in the world as was.'

He gave me his blessing, a knife, a new t, and a pair of shoes, with an old haver- s to put them in, a dried venison-ham, ick was, however, of my own shooting,) l as much parched corn as I chose to car- ; and my step-mother adding, as proofs of affectionate regard, a pair of stockings l a worsted nightcap of her own knitting, ade them farewell; and, in company with ee other adventurers like myself, turned r face towards Pittsburg, with the design proceeding to Kentucky; where I was told night have a fine farm for nothing, save an casional fight for it with the Indians, and enty of stock, horses and cows, as many as

I might want from anybody, for the mere asking.

“ Arriving at Pittsburg, then a miserable little hamlet, in which no wiseacre could foresee the bustling and important city into which it has now grown, I began to be somewhat alarmed at the dismal stories every one had to tell of the terrors of the downward voyage, of the frequent, nay, daily destruction of boats with all on board, by the Indians; from whom, many declared, it was a mere accident and miracle that any boats should escape at all. My companions were even more dismayed than I, one of them returning home within a week, and the others hiring themselves out at labour upon the fortress, which the government of the United States was then constructing at Pittsburg.

“ As for me, having a little money in my pocket, won at sundry shooting-matches during the preceding winter, and treasured up against a rainy day, I resolved to play the

man as long as it lasted, and then determine upon the course to be pursued—to work like my friends, for which I had little appetite, having a soul quite above condition, or join some enterprising boat's crew and proceed to Kentucky, for which I felt a hankering, notwithstanding the numerous perils of the voyage.

My money, as I employed it freely, first, in decorating my person with a much handsomer suit of clothes than had ever before adorned it, and, secondly, in establishing myself in the best tavern in the place, I soon began to make away with; upon which, having now made up my mind for Kentucky, I began to look about me for a boat, and the means of obtaining a passage in it to Kentucky.

In this I found no great difficulty. The preparations which General St. Clair, Governor of the territories north-west of the Ohio, and commander of the national forces

in the West, was making at his camp, Fort Hamilton, the site, as all know, of the present Cincinnati, for a great expedition, which, everybody supposed, was to sweep the Indians from the face of the earth, and so end the Indian wars in Kentucky for ever, had given a vast impulse and increase to emigration; and there was now not a week—indeed, scarce a day—in which some boat, or fleet of boats, did not depart from Pittsburg. And these were seldom so heavily laden, or strongly manned, but that room could be readily found for a single unencumbered man, a sprightly lad like myself, who could balance a rifle, had muscles for an oar, and otherwise promised to make himself serviceable on the voyage.

“It was my good fortune (for such, notwithstanding the disasters of the voyage, I shall always esteem it,) to find, among other emigrants who were making their preparations for descending the river, a certain Colo-

Storm, a worthy old gentleman of Virginia, who had fought through the French and the Revolution at the head of a regiment of Buckskins, and bore the reputation of a brave officer, as well as a rich man. He was on his way to Kentucky, to locate bounty-lands of his own, as well as others belonging to brother officers, for whom he acted as agent; and he intended also to settle in Kentucky; for which purpose he had brought with him his family—consisting, however, of but a single daughter, a beautiful and amiable girl seventeen—and a great deal of property, horses, cattle, furniture, and farming implements, and a dozen or more slaves, enough in all to fill two or three boats of the ordinary

With such a property at stake, and so many things to encumber him on the voyage, he was as desirous to enlist the services of as many bold assistants as he could procure, and he had fore offered, besides a free passage and

support, a considerable bounty to such persons as would take service with him for the expedition.

“Hearing of this, and that he had nearly completed his crews, and expected to put off in a very few days, I went to him forthwith, to offer my services, and was immediately ushered into his presence. He was a fine, portly, powdered, and military-looking old gentleman, but, as I soon saw, hot and irascible of complexion, his temper being especially soured at the time of my visit by a fit of the gout, which had suddenly fastened upon one of his legs; and as I entered the room I heard him scolding very bitterly at a young man who seemed to be his clerk or secretary, and was busy among books and papers, which he tumbled over in a hurried and confused manner, as if irritated by the Colonel’s remarks, and yet struggling to keep down his anger without reply.

“The old gentleman seeing me, demanded

sharply, ‘ who I was, and what I
ed ?’

I told him, ‘ I came to enter with him for
Kentucky voyage;’ upon which he gave
a stare of contempt, and angrily ex-
claimed, — ‘ What ! with that tailor’s finery
on your back ?’ — (for I had my best suit on) —
Life and death ! I want men — not cox-
swains ! — *men* ! you jackdaw ! — men that can
face death in the face, and take the devil by
the lap-knot !’

I told him, being somewhat galled by his
umptuous expressions, that ‘ I was man
made for his purpose, or anybody else’s ;’ at
which he burst into a passion, swore at me for
an insolent hobnail,’ and concluded the angry
episode by asking me ‘ what I was good for ? —
what I could do ?’

‘ Any thing,’ replied I, as stiffly as a lord,
‘ anything that any other man can do.’

‘ Oh, ay, I doubt not !’ said he ironically,
grinning over his shoulder at the young

man his clerk ; ‘ you can read novels, and write verses, and play the fiddle, and dangle after the women, eh ? ’ — and he darted another bitter glance at the young fellow, who put his hand up to his head, and twisted it among his hair, looking very much incensed, but still made no reply.

“ ‘ I can read,’ said I, and with great truth and honesty, ‘ very well in the Testament, and any other book with big print : and I can write, too, right smart,—only my master never put me in small-hand.’ At which answer Colonel Storm burst into a laugh, which I mistook for a laugh of incredulity, and therefore hastened to assure him I spoke nothing but the truth ; adding, which I did with great frankness, that, ‘ as for the fiddle, I knew nothing about it, having never tried my hand at any thing better than a banjo. But as for the women,’ I said with equal honesty, ‘ though I don’t know any thing about dangling, I reckon I can kiss a pretty girl as well as any body.

‘ Well,’ said Colonel Storm, fetching ther laugh, and then giving me a second bolical grin, which, I believe, was owing to a sudden twinge in his foot, ‘ that’s neither here nor there: what can you do that’s like a man? — for there’s the point to be considered?’

‘ ‘ I can draw a good bead upon a rifle,’ I replied: — upon which the Colonel roared with approbation, ‘ Now you talk like a man, and not like a jackass!’ ‘ Yes, sir,’ I continued, swelling with a sense of my importance and superior skill in an exercise which I perceived he regarded as a merit; ‘ I can’t pretend to do any great shakes at the reading and writing and fiddling, but I can go the Old Sinner and a cut-bore, kill death at a knife-fight, and out-wrestle any man of my inches this side the Alleghany!’ All which was perhaps more than half true; for in those, my cubling days, was, I am sorry to say, something of what we now-a-days call ‘ a young screamer.’

“ ‘ Bravo !’ cried Colonel Storm, turning maliciously to the young secretary, — ‘ do you hear that, Tom Connor ? Here’s a young fellow can shoot, and fight, and do other things a man can, and not a bit of reading, and writing, and fiddling, and woman-dangling, does he care for. Oons ! sir, I thought I should have made a man of you !’

“ The young fellow, Connor, as the Colonel called him, started up, as if stung by the old man’s remark, and, I believe, was about to make some passionate reply : but just then the Colonel’s daughter came into the room, with some drug-stuff in a cup she had brought her father, and Connor instantly resumed his seat, busying himself among the papers.

“ The young lady remained in the room but a few moments ; but I had time to observe she was what I called her—that is, a very beautiful girl, whose charms and elegance,—such as I had never before seen equalled

among the women of our rude border country,—almost struck me dumb with admiration. I saw her look very earnestly, as she passed his chair, at the young secretary, who, however, kept his eyes sullenly fixed on his papers; a circumstance which appeared to me to displease the young lady, who drew herself up and proceeded to her father, to whom she presented the cup, which, with sundry wry faces, he swallowed; and then, giving her a kiss, and calling her ‘his dear Alicia,’ he dismissed her from the apartment.

“The old gentleman now gave me to understand that he accepted my services, bade me write my name on a book before the secretary, whom he ordered to advance me a sum of money, being a part of his bounty, which Connor immediately did; and I found myself enlisted, for such was the term the old soldier applied to the engagement, in his ‘private broad-horn service,’—so Colonel Storm called

it,—to be attached to Boat No. 1, in the capacity of rifleman, oarsman, and, indeed, all other capacities, as might be necessary. I was ordered to present myself at the boat on the following morning, and hold myself in readiness to depart within two days, and then took my leave.

“ While I was leaving the room, there entered a gentleman, with whose appearance I was very much struck. He was a tall, elegant man, thirty years old, wore a half-military suit of clothes, finely made, had bright eyes, and long black hair, which he wore without powder, and, in short, had every air of a gallant soldier and distinguished gentleman. I heard Colonel Storm, who received him with much warmth and cordiality, though grinning at the moment under a paroxysm of pain, salute him by the name of Captain Sharpe; and I observed that while he bowed, which he did very politely in passing, to

Connor the secretary, the latter, though he bent his head in return, gave him a look as black as midnight. It was evident he was no friend of Connor, or Connor no friend of him.

CHAPTER III.

THE STORY OF MICHAEL LAW CONTINUED—A BORDER
BALL, AND AN INCIDENT.

“THESE things, which I mention so particularly now, because they have an intimate connection with my story, struck me with some interest at the time. And having, besides, a natural curiosity to know something of the individuals who were to be my companions in the voyage, I made inquiries concerning them of sundry persons better acquainted with their history than myself, though without acquiring much more than I already knew.

“The young man, Connor, I learned, was a dependant and *protégé* of the Colonel, a

son of a poor soldier,—for his origin was no higher, — who had, in some way or other, managed to lose his life in saving that of the Colonel. The latter, from gratitude to his preserver, extended his protection to the soldier's boy, whom he had reared up and educated in his own house, and almost adopted as his own child. I was assured he always had been, and was still, a great favourite with the old gentleman, who was extremely fond of him; but then the Colonel was a whimsical and violent tempered man, and the gout had, of late, made him a hundred times more wayward and irascible than ever, so that it was scarcely possible for any one about him, but his own daughter, to endure his furious attacks of ill-humour. Connor was, from his position continually near his person, more exposed to suffer from his wrath than others; but Connor had arrived at an age, when, beginning to be conscious of his dependant condition, he was naturally the more intolerant of unkindness.

The Colonel had twitted him in my presence with certain effeminate propensities, a love of books, music, female society, &c., and neglect of all manly accomplishments; which the young man must have felt as the more unreasonable, since it was represented that the Colonel had himself, by scarce ever allowing the favourite out of his sight, prevented his acquiring the active habits he commended, and compelled him into those effeminate ones which he condemned.

“ But with all the scolding and fault-finding he was forced to endure, I was assured, Connor was as much beloved as ever, and that there was more than a probability the Colonel would, some day, prove his affection by making him his son in reality, — that is, by giving him his fair daughter Alicia to wife.

“ Of Captain Sharpe, all I could learn was, that he was a very gallant officer, a South Carolinian, and son of an old military friend

and brother-in-arms of Colonel Storm, who had stumbled upon him by accident in Pittsburg, and received him to his friendship as a worthy son of his old comrade. What had brought such a fine gentleman as Captain Sharpe to the frontier did not so clearly appear; though some said it was because of an unfortunate duel with a brother officer, which, being of very recent occurrence, had compelled the survivor to banish himself for a time from society and the world. I must confess, that I heard some uncharitable persons hint a suspicion that Captain Sharpe was not in all respects the honourable and exemplary personage his fine appearance seemed to show; and of this opinion, it appeared, was young Connor, the secretary, who, I was informed, had got himself into a difficulty with his hot-headed protector, by acquainting the latter with his suspicions; for, it seemed, the veteran had been captivated by the soldier, 'a man,' as he called him, 'after

his own heart,' and would endure no imputations against his honour, however, to appearance, reasonable and just. Of this I had myself, after a time, very good proof, as I shall presently relate.

“ Having thus obtained all the information to be then acquired, and visited the Colonel's boats, to make the acquaintance of my fellow *engagés*, my affairs settled, and some money again in my pocket, I turned about, like a lad of spirit, to see how I could spend my few days of liberty to the best advantage. It happened that a ball, got up by the garrison officers and others, the gentry of the town, was to take place that night; and to this, being blessed with an equal stock of simplicity and assurance, I resolved to go, not having the least suspicion that my appearance there could involve any impropriety. With a good coat on my back, I felt myself equal to any body; and my border breeding

had taught me but little of the distinctions of society.

“To the ball I accordingly went; and, as it was held in the big room of a hotel, was by no means managed with the tender solicitude to keep out intruders that now prevails at such entertainments, and exhibited among its highly miscellaneous assemblage many individuals not a whit more genteelly dressed than myself. I neither found difficulty in making my way into the room, nor, for a long time, of maintaining my position in it.

“I must confess, that I was at first rather daunted by the appearance of the company, so much finer, notwithstanding an occasional departure from elegance, than any I had ever seen before; the dashing looks of the officers in their uniforms, of young civilians with powdered heads and velvet breeches, and, above all, of the ladies arrayed in their silks

and satins, their plumes, and ribands, and laces; and the fine music, for such it appeared to me, made by a military band, added to some half a dozen fiddles, had also its effects in abashing and embarrassing me; and had any body at that moment made objection to my intrusion, I have no doubt I should have sneaked quietly out of the room, conscious, for the first time, that I had stumbled into society quite above my condition.

“But no one noticed me, and my embarrassment began gradually to wear away; and besides, I fell upon a means of recruiting my courage in a still more expeditious and effectual way. I observed that many of the gentlemen dancers, after handing the usual ball-room refreshments to their partners, turned up their own noses at them—that is, not at their partners, but the refreshments—and slyly slipped down stairs to the bar of the hotel, where more manly refreshments were

to be had. Perceiving this, and not knowing what I could better do than imitate my betters, I slipped down likewise, and sorry I am to say, not once only, but several times; so that, in the end, my modesty took to itself wings, and I found myself as bold as a lion and happy as a lord; in short, entirely beside myself. It must be recollected, that I was a young and ignorant booby, who, besides being just let loose upon the world, and therefore incapable of taking care of myself, possessed a brain none of the strongest for resisting generous liquors.

“ My first glass infused such courage into my veins, that I was able to look boldly around me upon the assembly, here giving a gentleman a stiff look, and there staring a lady out of countenance. While thus engaged, my eyes fell by chance upon my employer's daughter, the fair Alicia, who, it seemed, was present, and, indeed, was considered the great beauty of the ball. She was

about to dance a minuet, and, as it proved, with Captain Sharpe, who led her into the middle of the room; where space was immediately made for them, the company clustering eagerly around, as if expecting to witness an uncommon display of elegant dancing. Nor were they deceived. I had never before seen such a dance as a minuet; the measures which I had learned to tread being confined to jigs and reels, and the still more primitive double-shuffle. I saw a minuet, therefore, for the first time, and, as it happened, danced by as superb a pair of creatures as ever trod a ball-room floor, or walked through the mazes of that dance, the most dignified and beautiful ever invented. Every body was in raptures at the spectacle, and when the dance was over, many clapped their hands, and cried *Bravo* and *Brava*; while I myself, being as much intoxicated with delight as the rest, cried aloud, ‘Hurrah for pretty-toes!’ (meaning the fair Alica,) ‘go it

ag'in, for God's sake !' It was fortunate that the plaudits of the company, which were loud and numerous, drowned my voice, and so prevented the compliment outraging the ears of the beautiful dancer, or, indeed, reaching those of any other person.

"After this, I frequently observed the Colonel's daughter, who was, during the whole evening, so closely besieged by Captain Sharpe, that no one else seemed able to approach her; and I thought to myself, thinks I, 'if we don't get them boats off in no time, the sodger will have the girl from the secretary, or there ain't no moonshine.' Verily, the Captain seemed pleased with the lady, and the lady with the Captain.

"It was no very long time after this that I reached that grand acme of courage of which I have spoken; and being tired of playing the looker-on, I resolved to have a dance as well as my betters. So, having paid another visit to the bar, I returned to the

ball-room to select a partner ; and, as the Old Imp, the father of impudence, would have it, who so proper to serve my turn as the queen of the ball, the lovely Alicia. I can't pretend to recollect what were precisely the thoughts and feelings which at that moment crowded my conceited noddle ; but, I believe, I had a kind of impression that,—from having seen her, during the audience, with her father,—I had quite a right to claim her acquaintance. At all events, I remember well enough that I marched up to her, and making a bow and scrape, that unfortunately swept a lieutenant of infantry off his legs, besides some damage done to the skirts of a lady's dress, 'begged to ax the honour to go a jig with her.' She started up, looking as proud and haughty as a peacock, and gave me such a bitter stare as I never thought could come from such amiable eyes. I felt quite incensed at her, thinking myself insulted ; and no doubt should have told her

so had not a great confusion suddenly arisen among the gentlemen, some of whom asked 'who the drunken scoundrel was, and how he got in?' while others swore 'I was a rascally boatman,' and 'must be kicked out.' A tall officer, with two epaulettes on, seized me by the shoulders, to hustle me out; whereupon I knocked him down;—a favour that was repaid with interest by half a dozen others, who fell upon me, amidst a confusion of shrieks from the women and outcries from the men; which is the last I recollect of the adventure; for what with kicks and cuffs, of which I received an abundance, and a tumble down the stairs, that terminated the controversy, I was soon deprived of all sense and remembrance.

CHAPTER IV.

NO MAN A HERO TO HIS OWN VALET-DE-CHAMBRE.

“ I RECEIVED, in short, a terrible drubbing, which was doubtless no more than I merited, though more than I afterwards found agreeable. I did not entirely and satisfactorily, indeed, recover my wits until the next day, when I found myself in bed, where I had been deposited by some good-natured souls, and from which it was more than a week before I found myself able to rise again—so soundly and thoroughly had I been threshed for my impertinence. Nor do I believe I should have escaped so soon, had it not been for young

Connor, the Secretary, who, with all his faults, was a very kind and humane youth; and although I had no more claim upon him than I derived from being in the service of his patron, was very attentive in visiting me, and administering to my wants, during the time that I lay sick and suffering, and neglected by every body else. His goodness made a strong impression upon my feelings, and I swore I would requite it with my life-blood, if necessary. In truth, it gained my heart entirely. I learned from him—a piece of information which was the more agreeable to me, as I feared my misfortune would cause me to lose my commission in the broad-horn service—that there was no fear of my being left behind, the voyage having been put off for a time in consequence of my commander's sickness, Colonel Storm being laid upon his back like me, but laid by a different cause—that is, by a new fit of the gout. And, indeed, I was entirely restored before he re-

covered sufficiently to begin the voyage, which was not until two weeks after the day of my enlistment.

“ In the mean while, I found myself a second time with leisure on my hands, and as much disposition as ever to enjoy it. I made several new friends, whom, however warned by past experience, I did not seek for in a ball-room, nor among those elegant personages, who, I began to perceive, were, or were resolved to consider themselves, my superiors. At the start, I felt disposed to ask the friendship of the gallant Captain Sharpe ; I was now content to swear everlasting friendship with the Captain’s man—a scoundrelly fellow, who met my advances with extreme cordiality, and immediately gambled me out of all my money.

“ This worthy individual, who had been a soldier, like his master—a deserter from a British regiment in the revolution—the evening before the broad-horns got under way, treated me to a supper and a bowl of punch ; in the course of which he acquainted me with

sundry interesting particulars in relation to his master and himself, of which I had been before entirely ignorant. And, first, he gave me to understand that his master, Captain Sharpe, had volunteered his agreeable society and valiant assistance to my employer, Colonel Storm, in the voyage to Kentucky, having resolved to sail with us, out of pure regard for the Colonel, his father's friend ; and, secondly, that he himself, Samuel Jones, the servant, could not countenance his master in any such doings, having a great aversion to Indians, and especially to Indians armed with tomahawks and scalping-knives. In brief, I found Mr. Samuel Jones was in great dread of the perils of the voyage, which feeling he did all he could to infuse into my own mind. He had picked up every story, true and false, that was told of Indian atrocities committed on the Ohio ; and to these he added legends of spectres, devils, and other supernatural agents, by whom the voyager was often haunted and harassed, and, in spite of himself, driven into

the hands of the savages. Thus, he had a story of a phantom warrior in a canoe, (supposed to be the ghost of old Bald Eagle, the Delaware Chief, whose mangled corse, set afloat by his murderer, forms a well-known and ghastfully picturesque incident in border history,) who dogged the boats of emigrants, and by the mere terror of his presence drove them into the ambush prepared by his living countrymen ; and another legend of a still more frightful spectre, a gory refugee, who, when the navigators slept, stole into their boats, and with their own oars, rowed them silently ashore, into the midst of their watchful enemies.

“ These strange stories, which had, I confess, the effect of renewing my alarms to a certain extent, I remembered the more readily, as I found they had made their way among my fellow voyagers, and were afterwards recalled to my mind by events that occurred during the descent.

“ Mr. Samuel Jones, having opened his heart by repeated applications to the bowl, did not refuse to carry his confidence still further ; and he told me many curious things concerning his master and other persons, including his excellent self, to which I should have perhaps attached more importance, had I not supposed the punch had made him poetical. He told me what I then considered a very preposterous story about his master ; namely, that this exemplary gentleman and soldier, having broken his father’s heart by evil courses, and abandoned, after meanly plundering her of her property, a deserving but unhappy wife, (for Jones assured me his master was married,) had finished his villanies by debauching the wife of his best friend, and blowing out the husband’s brains by way of reparation ; to which latter exploits he owed his sudden exile to the back woods, a further residence in a civilized community having been thus rendered impossible.

“ This account, I repeat, I considered a

mere invention of Mr. Jones. And in this opinion I was confirmed by his telling me sundry stories concerning himself, which, had I believed them, would have proved him as thorough a rogue as his master. My incredulity, however, I soon found, was, in this latter particular, wholly misplaced; for Mr. Jones, who was so unwilling to dare the perils of the Ohio voyage, it was early next morning discovered, had left his master's service some time during the night, having previously taken the precaution to rob the gallant soldier of every valuable he possessed. The only inconvenience resulting from this was, that Captain Sharpe was compelled to borrow all my generous employer's loose cash, to refit for the voyage, having no leisure left to look after the robber. Indeed, within an hour after the discovery of his loss was made—that is, at sunrise that morning, the 26th of April—we unmoored our boats, and were soon afloat upon the bosom of the Ohio.

CHAPTER V.

THE VOYAGE BEGUN.

“OUR flotilla consisted of three boats, two of them of very large size, and somewhat overburthened with goods and cattle. That in which I was stationed, being the flag-ship, in which Colonel Storm commanded in person, was somewhat smaller than the others, not so heavily laden, and in all respects better fitted out—a superiority which it doubtless owed to the presence of the fair Alicia, his daughter. It contained, besides, the usual cabin for the shelter of the crew, a smaller one set apart for the use of the Colonel’s daughter—a sanctuary which none had the privilege of

entering, save the commander himself, the lady's female attendants, and, sometimes, the gallant Captain Sharpe. The horses were divided between the larger boats; in fact, every thing on board of the commander's boat seemed to have been arranged with a view to detract as little as possible from his daughter's comfort. The very crew seemed to have been selected with an eye to her approbation, consisting, besides four of the Colonel's oldest and most faithful negroes, of ten men, the soberest and best behaved of all his *engagés*. There were nineteen souls in all on board the boat—Colonel Storm, his daughter and two female servants, Captain Sharpe, and the fourteen men as above mentioned.

“ I was surprised, and somewhat disconcerted, to find that my friend Connor was not in the Colonel's boat; but reflecting that the latter had not yet entirely recovered from his gout, and was, indeed, as fretful and irascible as man could be, I thought in my heart that

the youngster had shown his good sense by entering, as I did not doubt he had done, one of the other boats. What was my astonishment to learn, which I did towards the close of the day, that Connor was not with the party at all—that he had left the Colonel's service—nay, that he had been ignominiously driven from it in consequence of a rupture with his patron on the preceding day. This I learned from some of the men whom I heard whispering the matter over among themselves, but who were too little informed on the subject to be able to acquaint me with all the particulars. It seemed, however, that the quarrel had, in some way, grown out of a dispute the secretary had had with Captain Sharpe, in the course of which swords had been drawn between them; though what had so embittered these doughty champions against one another, no one pretended to say. All the men knew was, that the blame was thrown upon Connor—that Colonel Storm had taken part against him,

and immediately turned him adrift; since which, nothing had been heard of him by any of the party.

“ This intelligence filled me with concern; and such was my affection for the young man, who I was sure (without knowing any thing about it) had been harshly and unjustly treated, that I was, for a time, more than half inclined to jump ashore, and return to Pittsburg, for the purpose of seeking him out and offering him my services. But, having mentioned the design to some of my comrades, they gave me so dismal an account of the difficulties and dangers from Indians, which, even at so short a distance from Pittsburg, I should encounter in making my way along the river, that I was frightened out of my purpose, and determined, although reluctantly, to remain where I was.

“ As the young man's misadventure arose from his quarrel with Captain Sharpe, I contracted, from that moment, a strong dislike to the latter, who, it appeared to me, had ousted

Connor, only to step into his shoes—to take his place in the affections of the grum old Colonel, and, for aught I could tell, in those of his daughter too. I still could not give my belief to the stories told me of Captain Sharpe by his servant; it seemed impossible such things should be true of so elegant a gentleman. Nevertheless, I bore them in mind, resolved, if it should appear that Captain Sharpe was actually making love to the fair Alicia, to make her parent fully acquainted with them.

“ In this, I must confess, I had in view the mortification of Captain Sharpe, rather than the advantage of the Colonel’s daughter, for whom I felt, at first, no very friendly regard. I remembered her haughty and scornful looks at the ball, which I had not yet entirely forgiven; and my disgrace and discomfiture on that occasion, I considered as entirely owing to her. Besides, as I was now conscious of the distance fate had placed between us, I

was, at the beginning of the voyage, in continual fear, lest she should recognise me and make me the butt of her ridicule ; an apprehension, however, I soon ceased to entertain, being satisfied she had quite forgotten me.

“ I will here add, that my dislike to the young lady wore, of itself, rapidly away ; for, first, it was impossible I should indulge ill-will against a creature so young and lovely ; and, secondly, I perceived there was something on her mind that rendered her unhappy—something made visible on her face by a sadness that seemed to me to grow deeper day by day. I fancied the cause might be regret for the absence and misfortunes of Connor ; a conceit that wonderfully raised her in my esteem.

“ It happened, at the time when we began our voyage, that the river had fallen for the season unusually low ; so that some of the knowing persons in Pittsburg, considering the size and weight of the Colonel’s boats, had

advised him to wait for a rise of the waters; a piece of advice of which he took no notice, though other emigrants, who were ready to depart, postponed their voyage accordingly.

“ We were not long in discovering that we gained little but trouble by being in a hurry; for, besides that we got along but slowly, and with hard rowing, in consequence of the gentle current, we were perpetually driving a-ground, some one boat or the other, upon bars and sandbanks, from which it was a work of time and labour to escape. Indeed, one of the boats we found it impossible to get from a bar, on which she had grounded some dozen miles or so above Wheeling; and as, from her proximity to this settlement, and her position in the middle of the river, it was not thought she was in any danger from the savages, the crew consented to remain in her, waiting for a flood, and also for the fleet it was expected to bring down from Pittsburg,

with which they were to descend the river. We of the other boats, sick of our labours at the oar, rather envied the happy dogs whom we left taking their ease on the bar, with the prospect, in a few days, of resuming their voyage, borne along by the swelling current, without any toil of their own: nevertheless these happy personages, as we afterwards discovered, were, two nights after we left them, set upon by savages where they lay; and not one of them escaped to tell the story of their fate.

“Nor was that our only loss. Two nights after—perhaps at the very moment when our friends of the stranded boat were dying under the axes of their Indian assailants—the remaining large boat ran upon a snag, by which she was rendered a complete wreck, and we were compelled to abandon her. It was only by the greatest exertions we were so fortunate as to rescue the more valuable portions of her cargo, including two of the Colonel’s

finest horses, which we succeeded in transferring to our own boat: the others we left to their fate, after knocking away the side of the boat, and driving them into the river, whence they all swam to the shore, and doubtless soon found Indian masters. The crew, consisting of thirteen persons, was added to our own, which was thus increased to thirty-two souls — a number so greatly disproportioned to the size of our boat, that they were not received without the greatest inconvenience. But this we cared for the less, as we expected soon to reach the new settlement of Marietta, at the mouth of the Muskingum, where it was intended to put some of our superfluous men ashore, to wait for the boat we had left behind.

“ We reached Marietta the next day, and got rid of eight of the wrecked crew, retaining five, of whom two were slaves belonging to our commander in chief, the others *engagés*. Remaining at Marietta during the night, we

set out next morning under what might have been considered favourable auspices. The most important of these was a sudden swell of the river, which rose several feet in the night, and was still rapidly rising, when we cast off from the shore. We had thus a prospect of making our way by the mere force of the current, and so escaping, for the remainder of the voyage, the drudgery of the oar; besides clearing all rifts and sand-bars, of which we had already had experience more than enough. We set out, moreover, with such a crew as might be supposed to secure us a perfect exemption from Indian attacks — thirteen *engagés*, all well armed, and acquainted with arms, though no more than one of them had ever faced an Indian in battle; together with five able-bodied negro men, whom the Colonel had provided with muskets, and who could doubtless use them after some fashion; not to speak of the Colonel himself, who was too gouty for ac-

tive service, and Captain Sharpe, who, we had no doubt, would fight when the time came, though at present, as it appeared, more earnestly bent upon making himself agreeable to the commander's daughter than upon preparing for war.

“ With a military commander on board, (though sorely incapacitated for command,) it may be supposed, our forces were organized upon somewhat a military foundation. We were, at least, divided into watches, each of which, under its captain, appointed by Colonel Storm, had its regular turn of duty, both by day and by night.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PHANTOM CANOE.

“ THESE circumstances — the swell of the river and our undoubted strength — removed from the breasts of many the effects of an unfavourable occurrence, of which I have not yet spoken. It will be remembered, that honest Master Jones had informed me of the river being haunted by a spectral Indian in a canoe, whose appearance was the forerunner, if not the cause, of disaster; and that our boatmen had also been made acquainted with the legend. The night before we reached Marietta, such a spectre was seen, and seen

by all on board, — that is to say, a canoe with a human shape in it, dogging us at a considerable distance behind, and dogging us all night long. The watch, at first surprised, and then alarmed, woke up their sleeping companions; and, as I said, all on board saw it, though all were not, perhaps, of the same opinion in regard to its character. The superstitious declared it could be nothing less than the phantom of which so much had been told: while even those who denied its spectral nature, could explain the phenomenon only by supposing it was the boat of some Indian spy, whose cut-throat companions were lying in wait somewhere nigh at hand.

“ Captain Sharpe, to whom we commonly looked as our acting commander, (Colonel Storm being seldom able to come on deck,) upon being called up, laughed at us for a pack of ‘ cowardly noodles,’ as he very politely called us, declared we saw nothing but a floating log, or, at best, a drift canoe — cer-

tainly, he vowed 'there was no man in it' — and ordered us to back oars a little, to let it float by. Unfortunately for the Captain's explanation, the moment the broad-horn ceased to move, that moment the canoe, also, became stationary; and some of us swore we could hear the dip of the paddle by which it was brought to a stand, and made to stem the current. 'Ghost or no ghost,' said Captain Sharpe, dryly enough, 'it can do us no harm, so long as it keeps at a distance. If it comes nearer, hail it; and if it make no answer, let it have a taste of your rifles.' With these words, and a desperate yawn, that cut the last word in two, and kept it some forty seconds in the utterance, the gallant soldier went down to his mattress, treating the ghost with a degree of contempt nobody else could summon to his assistance. The ghost — for so the majority were resolved to consider the appearance — was well watched during the night: it kept at a highly respectful distance,

and at, or before daylight, it suddenly vanished away.

“ The night after we left Marietta, which was very dark and cloudy, the phantom again appeared, and caused as much discussion, and, among some, as much alarm, as before; the more so, perhaps, as, when first discovered, it was found to be much nearer to us than on the former occasion, — a degree of audacity which those on deck, the men of the second watch, rewarded by a volley of rifle-bullets, according to Captain Sharpe’s instructions, forgetting, however, the important preliminary of hailing the mysterious voyager. The effect of the volley was very happy, as boat and boatman instantly vanished from view, and were no more seen; for which reason no one, not even Captain Sharpe himself, found fault with the men for only half obeying his orders.

“ The disappearance of the phantom restored us all to good humour; and conscious now of our strength, conscious, too, of our

security on the top of the flood, by which we were so rapidly borne upon our voyage, with no necessity before us except that of keeping our boat in the centre of the river, and so out of all danger of Indian bullets from the shore, we began to laugh at past terrors, and assure each other that the voyage to Kentucky was by no means the dreadful thing it was represented to be.

“ From this state of things it is not surprising there resulted a certain degree of carelessness among the men in the night-watches, who, feeling that the hand at the steering-oar could perform all the duty supposed to be requisite to their safety, — that is, of keeping the boat in the mid-channel, — very frequently took advantage of the watch hours to throw themselves on the deck and steal a pleasanter nap than could be enjoyed in the crowded cabin below; and this kind of watching, I confess, on two or three occasions, I practised with great satisfaction myself.

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS IN THE BROAD-HORN.

“ IN due course of time, and without further accident, we arrived at the little French settlement of Gallipolis, which, being the last upon the river before reaching the Kentucky settlements, was always a stopping-place, where the emigrant obtained fresh stores of provisions, perhaps, but certainly the last news of Indian knaveries on the river below. At this place it was resolved to remain for a day and night, in the hope of being joined by our stranded boat. The time was passed by all attached to the broad-horn in such frolics and

diversions ashore as suited their several humours. Even the fair Alicia, who by this time was growing visibly thin and pale, a misfortune which her father himself, heartily sick of a broad-horn voyage, attributed to the confinement of the boat, was prevailed upon to take several rambles on shore, in which she was attended by Captain Sharpe, now, as every body could see, a fixed favourite of her father, and, as every body imagined, of the lady likewise. But it was observable that Miss Storm never went ashore without having one of her women also with her.

“Rambling along the river myself, it was my fate to stumble upon this little party at a moment when Captain Sharpe had taken advantage of a momentary separation of the fair Alicia from her servant to drop upon his knees, and pour into her tender ears a violent declaration of love. Not that I pretend to have overheard his actual expressions, — for I was too far from the pair for that, besides

beating a retreat the moment I discovered them, without their having noticed me, — but, as I saw him on his knees in an extremely elegant posture of adoration, I had no right to doubt what kind of prayers he was making. How the lady received his vows, whether favourably or not, I had no means of knowing or discovering, being in as great a hurry to get out of the way as Captain Sharpe, perhaps, was to win the lady's heart.

“ Having no longer any doubt that the handsome soldier had really formed the design of becoming the son-in-law of my commander, and remembering Jones's story of his marriage, as well as my resolution to make Colonel Storm acquainted with it, if necessary, I immediately returned to the boat; where the old gentleman, incapable of leaving it, was growling over his pangs, and, to my surprise, invoking all kinds of maledictions upon Connor, ‘ for deserting him,’ as he expressed it, in a grumbling soli-

loquy, ‘ in the midst of his torments and cares.’

“ ‘ Sir,’ said I, pouncing upon him without ceremony, and thinking this a favourable opportunity to open my communication, ‘ I thought, and so did every body else, you turned off Mr. Connor yourself!’

“ ‘ What’s that *your* business, you scoundrel?’ said he, as if enraged at my presumption; ‘ who gave you leave to talk to me about Tom Connor, or any thing else?’

“ ‘ Nobody gave it—I take it,’ said I; ‘ and I reckon, that, in turning off Mr. Connor, you got rid of just as good a friend and honest a servant as was ever misused in a fit of passion—that’s my notion. And I reckon, moreover, that, in putting Captain Sharpe into his place, you have helped yourself to a bit of snake-flesh, that will have a snap at you, rale viper-fashion, or at somebody you love as well as yourself, some day, there’s no doubt on it.”

“ ‘ What, you dog !’ cried Colonel Storm, seeming both incensed and astonished, ‘ are you abusing Sharpe, too ?’

“ ‘ I didn’t know,’ said I, ‘ that any body had ever said any thing against him. But, I tell you what, Colonel Storm—not to make a long story about it—Captain Sharpe is making love to Miss ‘Lishy ; and it seems to be generally agreed among us as how you intend to give her to him.’

“ ‘ Well, you brazen rascal !’ roared Colonel Storm, looking as if he would eat me, ‘ how does that concern *you* ?’

“ I had, by this time, got too well accustomed to the commander’s mode of conversing with his people, when in a passion, to take offence at his expressions ; and, therefore, replied, with as much equanimity as when I began the conversation,—‘ I don’t see that it concerns me much, any way, Colonel ; but, I rather reckon, it concerns a very amiable young lady ; and her honour—’

“ ‘ Her honour, you dog ! do you dare talk to me about my daughter’s honour ?’ cried the old gentleman, with increasing fury.

“ ‘ Colonel,’ said I, ‘ it don’t signify being in such a passion, and calling me hard names :—I just mean to tell you, that, if you give Captain Sharpe your daughter, she will get a husband who happens to have one wife,—perhaps half a dozen of ’em,—already.

“ ‘ You lie, you thief !’ said the veteran, catching at his crutch,—I believe, with the full intention of knocking me on the head ; a catastrophe which, supposing I should have permitted it to be attempted, which I was not disposed to do, was prevented by the sudden appearance of the young lady ; who, still attended by Captain Sharpe, at that moment entered the boat and the cabin where I had sought her parent. The angry old gentleman’s eyes flashed with double rage as soon as they fell upon the soldier ; but, as it happened, it was with rage not at the latter :—‘ Here, Sharpe,

you thief,' he cried, 'here's the old story over again ! Knock the villain's brains out—swears you are married !'

" At 'these words, the daughter, who, seeing her father's wrath, was on the point of stealing away to her own cabin, turned round with a look of astonishment and inquiry. ' Same old story Tom Connor got up—lying rascal !' continued the veteran : ' wife already, — poor deserted woman,—broken-hearted.—Rascally invention.—Tumble the dog into the river !'

" ' I beg,' said Captain Sharpe, looking for a moment a little confused, but soon recovering his composure,—' I beg Miss Storm will retire a moment, while I inquire into this odd adventure.'

" Miss Storm gave the Captain a searching, I thought even a scornful—though calmly scornful—look, and then stepped up to her father, upon whose shoulder she laid her hand, gazing him earnestly and sadly in the

face. ‘Father,’ she said, ‘the position in which I have been placed — need I say, by yourself?—in relation to Captain Sharpe, entitles me to inquire into any charges affecting his honour. I waive the right: I do not even ask *you*, my father, to act upon it. But I must be satisfied upon one point. You drove from you an old and once trusted friend,—Connor: and it seems, (although you never acquainted me with it,) that he preferred charges against Captain Sharpe;—in short, the very charges which, it seems, this young man brings against him.—Father! was it because of these charges you discarded poor Connor?’

“ ‘Ay!’ grumbled the veteran; — ‘told lies of the Captain: — all slander and malice.’

“ ‘It is enough,’ said the lady; and then added, — ‘slander and malice never stained the lips of Thomas Connor.’

“ ‘Spoken like a true-hearted gal!’ said I, vastly delighted to find the poor secretary had another friend beside myself in the boat.

‘And as for this here story about Captain Sharpe’s wife, I hold it to be as true as gospel,—’cause how, his own man Jones told me!’

“‘Excellent authority on which to damn a man’s reputation, certainly,—that of his own robbing, runaway lackey!’ cried Captain Sharpe, with a laugh; and then requested that Miss Storm would ‘remain and hear all that the fellow (meaning me) had to say against him.’

“‘It is neither necessary that I should hear, nor he say, any thing more against one who is now—whatever else he may be—my father’s guest,’ replied Miss Storm, calmly: ‘the subject may be more profitably resumed hereafter. And I beg,’ she added, ‘that neither my father nor Captain Sharpe will cherish any ill will against this young man, for bringing charges, which, however unfounded they may be, had certainly their origin in goodwill to my father, or to me.’

“ With these words, she retired to her little apartment; and Colonel Storm, denouncing me as ‘a great impudent blockhead,’ ordered me out of the cabin. As for Captain Sharpe, who, I expected, would have been thrown into a terrible rage, he burst into a laugh as soon as Miss Alicia departed, and told me I was ‘a very simple fellow, but would grow wiser hereafter,’—a mode of treating my charges which somewhat lessened my own opinion of their justice.

“ And so ended my assault upon the honour and dignity of Captain Sharpe, in which, though I met with nothing but discomfiture, I had the good fortune, without, however, knowing it, until some time afterwards, to make a friend of the fair Alicia.

CHAPTER VIII.

PREPARATION FOR WAR—VISIT FROM A SPECTRE.

“THE next morning, having waited in vain for our lagging boat, we bade farewell to the settlers of Gallipolis, by whom we were advised to be on our guard during the remainder of the voyage; and especially to beware of the country about the mouth of the Scioto, where several doleful accidents had already happened, and where boats were so frequently attacked that it was suspected the savages had there formed a permanent post for the annoyance of emigrants.

“We were told also to have a care against

being led into danger by white men — refugees and renegades; who were accustomed to present themselves on the banks of the river, at the appearance of a boat, into which they piteously entreated to be taken, declaring themselves captives just escaped from the Indians, or shipwrecked boatmen left helpless amid the horrors of the wilderness; which protestations, when hearkened to, commonly led the unsuspecting emigrant into an Indian ambush prepared for him on the shore, and thus to death or captivity. This peculiar caution had been several times before enforced upon us at the settlements we had previously visited; and we left Gallipolis with a full determination to be cajoled by no such villanous wiles, how craftily soever devised and practised.

“We were now, as we had every reason to believe, much nearer to danger from the Indians than we had been before, in the higher regions of the Ohio: yet, it is certain,

we left Gallipolis with less fear and anxiety among us than when we set out. We had, in fact, become accustomed to our boat, to the Ohio, to the solitude of the wilderness through which we floated, to the idea of danger, which we had conned over in our minds until we grew tired of it, and turned to happier and more cheerful thoughts. We were better navigators too, and understood our power of keeping ourselves out of mischief, by keeping our boat from the banks of the river, and so beyond the reach of Indian rifles; and, besides, we were all learned in Indian wiles and stratagems, to know which was to know how to escape them.

“And thus it happened, that we left Gallipolis with light hearts, and approached the scene where danger was most to be apprehended, with a degree of indifference amounting almost to fatality. Such blind security, growing with increase of peril, and attended with every kind of carelessness and negli-

gence, was often found among the Ohio voyagers of that day, and was as often the cause of calamities, which a little common-sense solicitude would have enabled the unhappy adventurers easily to avoid.

“The day on which we left Gallipolis proved, perhaps, the most agreeable of the whole voyage. It was now late in spring; the weather was warm and genial, and the magnificent forests bordering the river were in full leaf and bloom, filling the eye with beauty and the nostrils with sweet odours. The evening was still more delicious, and was passed by the *engagés* in mirth and jollity, in singing, and even in dancing; for which we had an incentive provided in a fiddle, sawed and clawed in the true old ‘Virginny’ style, by one of the Colonel’s negroes. And in this kind of diversion we were freely indulged by our commander, because it seemed to amuse the mind of his fair daughter, who sat for a while looking on the dance, smiling encouragement.

“ By and by, however, the weather changed, and a shower fell, which put an end to the untimely revelry ; and the dancers retreated to the cabin and their beds, leaving the deck in possession of the usual watch of four men, of whom the one at the steering oar was the only one actually engaged in any duty. This first shower was but the precursor of others, which continued to fall at intervals during the night, and of a change from warm to very cold weather ; so that, by and by, the deck lost many of its charms, even to the men of the watch, becoming, in truth, the most uncomfortable part of the whole boat. I remember being vastly pleased at ending my own watch, which happened at midnight, and creeping down to a warm bunk in the cabin, where slumber was so many degrees more agreeable than in the cold wet air above.

“ Upon leaving Gallipolis, Captain Sharpe, who was often seized with fits of military

fire and zeal, had thought proper to harangue the crew upon the dangers we ought now to expect to encounter, and exhort us to a careful performance of all our duties, of which the night-watching was, as he justly observed, the most important; and as we should, in all probability, during the course of the following night, reach the mouth of the Scioto, which, all knew, was regarded as the most dangerous point of the whole navigation, he especially enjoined it upon us, this night, to watch in reality—that is, to keep our eyes open and about us, instead of lying down to sleep, as we had been in the habit of doing for several nights past. And to encourage us in our duties, he declared that he intended for the future, or so long as danger should seem to threaten, to share them with us—that is, to take part with us in the watch; and he accordingly appointed himself to the middle watch, the longest and dreariest of all, from midnight until four in the morning.

“His zeal greatly delighted Colonel Storm, who swore, ‘that was the way for a soldier to behave;’ though I cannot say it was equally agreeable to the boatmen. On the contrary, I heard a great deal of grumbling among them, upon this particular night, when, at the change of the watch, Captain Sharpe was heard getting up to join the next band of watchers. It was generally apprehended that the presence of the disciplined soldier would interfere with all the little arrangements which the men might otherwise have taken to secure their own comfort. Happily for the grumblers, Captain Sharpe proved to be no such severe disciplinarian.

“I retired to my bed, and there slept, perhaps, three hours; when I was wakened by a terrible dream of Indians attacking the boat; which so disturbed and disordered my mind that I was not able to get to sleep again; and being weary of my cot, I got up

and crept to the deck, for the purpose of looking out upon the night. As I made my way through the cabin, in which was burning a little lamp, yielding a meagre light, I was astonished to perceive Captain Sharpe, with several —indeed, as it afterwards proved, all—the men of his watch lying sound asleep on the floor, having evidently slipped away one after the other, from their duties on deck.

“Although surprised at this dereliction on the part of the gallant soldier, especially after the great zeal he had displayed during the day, I was not at all concerned or alarmed, being of an opinion, which I had frequently expressed, when kept longer than I liked at the helm—namely, that the boat could make her way down the river just as well without steering as with. Nevertheless, as the experiment had never before been actually tried, I felt some curiosity to find how it succeeded; and accordingly stepped immediately out on

deck to see ; which was a feat the less disagreeable as the showers were now over, the clouds had broken away, and the stars shining so brilliantly that objects nigh at hand could be pretty distinctly discerned.

Knowing that all the watch were in the cabin fast asleep, judge my astonishment to find, as I did, the moment I reached the deck, a human figure at the steering oar, and the boat within but half a dozen yards of the river-bank, upon which the unknown helmsman seemed urging it with might and main ; and fancy the terror that instantly seized me, when, looking upon the apparition, I discovered the spectral refugee, (for who could it be but he ?) the hero of the ghost story, who, with a person all ghastly to behold, and a visage bound with a bloody handkerchief, and cadaverously resembling my poor discarded friend Tom Connor's, had stolen into the boat, and was now driving it furiously ashore.

“ At this sight, I was seized with a terrible panic, as may be supposed, and uttering a yell that instantly roused every soul on board, leaped from the deck among my comrades, who came tumbling out, some shrieking ‘ Indians ! ’ and others asking what was the matter. I told them we were going ashore, and that a ghost was at the helm ; upon which two thirds of them ran back into the cabin, where they fell upon their knees and cried for mercy, while others, bolder or more curious, rushed upon the deck to have a view of the spectre. But the spectre was gone, entirely vanished away into air, or into the river ; and the only evidence of his visit was seen as the broad-horn suddenly swept round a jutting point, which it almost touched, and then, borne onwards by a powerful current, shot again into the channel.

“ This extraordinary occurrence produced, as may be imagined, an extraordinary ferment, in the midst of which I was summoned to the

presence of the commander-in-chief; with whom I found the fair Alicia, looking wild with fright, and also Captain Sharpe, the latter busily engaged in assuring Colonel Storm, for I overheard him, as I approached, that ‘all was well—nothing was the matter, only an uproar made by a man roused from his sleep by the nightmare.’

“ ‘ You saw a ghost, you loon?’ said Colonel Storm, turning from the soldier to myself; ‘ what ’s the matter ?’

“ Upon this, I told the veteran the whole story, not omitting the soldierly desertion of his post by the gallant Captain — notwithstanding that this worthy gentleman made me many significant hints to hold my tongue —among others, by touching his pocket with one hand and his lip with the other, as if to say, ‘ keep your peace, and you shall be well rewarded;’ and then scowling like a thunder-gust when he found I proceeded, without regarding his efforts to check me.

“ My relation produced a considerable effect both upon the old gentleman and his daughter; but it seemed to me, they were more struck by the exposure of Captain Sharpe’s desertion of his post, than by anything else, the lady looking upon him with mingled wonder and contempt, while the Colonel grumbled his displeasure aloud — ‘ Conduct for a court-martial — Fine officer-like behaviour, by George, sir !’

“ Captain Sharpe declared ‘ it was all a mistake — a very unaccountable occurrence; protested he had not left the deck two minutes, and only left it to treat the watch, who were cold and wet, to a glass of liquor; and that it was a mere accident and inadvertence, if the helmsman left his post at the same time; all which — as unconscionable a falsehood as was ever uttered — the worthy personage offered to prove by calling in the men; whose assertions, backed by his own word, ‘ he hoped Colonel Storm would think sufficient

to disprove the charge of a single individual like me, especially after the veritable nonsense I had just told them about the ghost.'

" 'Humph !' said the Colonel, with a snort—' what sort of a ghost was it ?'

" 'It was like Mr. Connor,' said I ; ' only that it was pale and grim, and had a bloody handkerchief round its brows.'—At which words Miss Storm looked wilder than ever, and even the Colonel her father started, with a piteous ' God bless my soul ! Hope nothing has happened the boy—Never forgive myself, if he should haunt me !'

" Here Captain Sharpe interfered, asking the Colonel with a laugh, ' if he really believed my ridiculous story ? if he did not see that the poor lad' (meaning me,) ' had been dreaming ; and that all I had seen, or thought I had seen, was mere visionary nothing.'

In short, I believe he quite staggered the Colonel ; who, however, having finished ex-

aming me, ordered me out of the cabin ; so that I never knew what was the result of Captain Sharpe's ingenious attempt to explain away his desertion of his duties on deck.

CHAPTER IX.

THE INDIAN CAMP—AGREEABLE SURPRISE.

“THE sensation produced by this adventure on the crew was too deep to readily subside, and they remained upon deck for the remainder of the night, now questioning me upon the particulars of the ghostly visitation, now speculating upon the consequences it foreboded; all of them agreeing, in the end, that it was an omen of some disaster, which must sooner or later occur. There was no carelessness or negligence now; the helm was doubly manned, as were also our three pair of oars, at which the men voluntarily placed themselves, not indeed to row, but ready to give way,

with all their force, at the first appearance of danger.

“ In this condition of things, we floated onwards till the gray of dawn; at which period a fog began to settle on the river, obscuring, although not entirely concealing, the banks, the larger objects, as the hills and trees, being still partially discernible at the distance of one or two hundred yards. At this period also, we noticed an appearance upon the shore which immediately forced upon us the conviction that the warning of the spectral appearance had not been made in vain. This was the sudden gleam of a fire on the right bank of the river, followed by a second, and this again by others; until, in fact, no less than six or seven different fires were seen faintly glimmering through the fog and dusk of morning.

“ It will be readily supposed that this appearance struck us all with alarm, as, indeed, it did. Not doubting that these portentous

lights came from Indian watchfires, and that they were burning in the camp of which we had heard so much at Gallipolis, we immediately sent word down to our commander, and then, without waiting for orders, began to direct the boat over towards the Virginia, or Kentucky side, taking care, however, to handle our oars with as little noise as possible, not at all desiring to disturb the slumbers of the red barbarians, who, we doubted not, were lying stretched around the fires.

“ But there were vigilant watchers in the dreaded camp; and just as our commander, startled out of gout and incapacity by the sudden intelligence, hobbled out upon deck, a clear voice rang from the shore—‘ Boat a-hoy !’ and then hastily added — ‘ If you are good Americans, hold oars a moment; we have good news for you—and for all honest men—to carry down to the settlements.’

“ ‘ You lie, you refugee rascal !’ cried Colonel Storm, with a voice louder than the hail-

er's: 'Can't put any of your cursed tricks upon an old soldier. Handle your arms, men,' he added, addressing the crew, and still speaking at the top of his voice;—'handle your arms, and give the villain a shot.'

" 'Give me a shot!' exclaimed the stranger, with a tone of indignation; 'why, who the devil do you take us to be?'

" 'You!' quoth Colonel Storm, 'I take to be a white Indian—a renegade ragamuffin from the settlements—whose business is to decoy numskull emigrants into ambush; and your companions I take to be a knot of damnable savages, ripe for plunder and murder.'

" 'Sir,' quoth the invisible speaker, 'you were never more mistaken in your life. We are white men, and soldiers—a detachment of five hundred mounted men from the army at Fort Hamilton.'

" 'Hah!' cried Colonel Storm, while all of us pricked up our ears in amazement—'white

men? a detachment from St. Clair's army?
Who's your commander?"

" 'Colonel Darke, of the Infantry,' was the immediate reply.

"The name of this gallant officer, already well known as one of the best of St. Clair's lieutenants, completed our surprise, besides throwing Colonel Storm into a ferment of delight. 'Knew him of old—were captains together at Monmouth!' he cried, and immediately after, having ordered the rowers to back oars, demanded 'what they—the detachment, were doing, or had done there?' an inquiry which was, however, anticipated by the stranger crying—'We have broken up the Indian camp here—fell upon the dogs this morning by daybreak—took them by surprise, destroyed and captured fifty-three warriors, drowned a dozen or two more, with a loss on our own side of only eleven killed and wounded.'

“ Back oars ;—three cheers for Darke and his gallant men !—cried Colonel Storm, adding his own warlike voice to the lusty and joyous hurrahs, which we instantly set up.

“ ‘ Now,’ quoth our friend on shore, ‘ you behave like men of sense ! I am on duty here to hail boats ; by the first one of which that arrives, our commander desires to send the news of our victory to the settlements and the Commander-in-chief.’

“ ‘ We’ll bear his despatches, were it to the end of the earth !’ cried Colonel Storm, with enthusiasm.

“ ‘ And perhaps,’ said the officer-sentinel, for such he seemed, ‘ you could make room for a poor wounded officer — young Darke, the Colonel’s nephew — whom the commander is anxious to send to the settlements ?’

“ ‘ Shall have my own bed !’ roared our veteran chief ; adding immediately a command to ‘ put the boat ashore ;’ an order which the crew, excited to rapture by the glorious news,

received with loud cheers, and instantly put into execution. The prow was turned to the shore, and, all that could, seized at once upon the oars, urging the clumsy vessel across the current ; while the stranger ran along the bank, directing us to the most advantageous point to land.

“ In two minutes the broad-horn grated upon the sand, and three of our men, one of them holding a rope, leaped ashore to make her fast ; the rest of us crowded together on the deck, looking eagerly for our new friends, those gallant spirits who had so effectually swept the banks of the dreaded Indians.

“ ‘ Three more cheers for Darke and his brave boys all ! ’ ” roared Colonel Storm ; at which words a great halloo was raised—but not by us. It was the yell of a hundred savages, who suddenly started to life, leaping from among stones and bushes ; and, giving out such whoops as were never before heard but from the lungs of devils incarnate, poured

a sudden fire of rifles upon us, which, aimed at us, all clustered together on the narrow deck, and from the distance of only a few paces, wrought the most horrible carnage, killing, I verily believe, one half of our whole number, and wounding, with but two or three exceptions, every other soul on board. And in the midst of it all, we could hear the voice of the fiendish renegade, to whose unparalleled duplicity we had thus miserably become the victims, exclaiming, with a taunting laugh, ‘What do you think of the “cursed refugees’ tricks” *now*, my fine fellows?’

CHAPTER X.**THE INDIAN ATTACK.**

“ ‘ **PUSH off !** ’ cried Colonel Storm ; but there were none to answer his call. The deck was occupied by the dead and the dying only ; all who could move having leaped down below, where they lay, some groaning and bleeding to death, some uttering hurried prayers, but all in a frenzy of terror, all trying to shelter themselves amongst bales and boxes from the shot, which the enemy, not yet content with slaughter, continued to pour into our wretched boat. Colonel Storm himself, struck down by a bullet through the thigh, lay amidst the rest ; not, indeed, cowering or lamenting, but

calling upon us, with direful oaths, now to ‘push off, and handle the oars,’ now to ‘get up, like men, and give the dogs one taste of our gunpowder;’ commands which, however, no one regarded.

“We had struck the land at a projecting point, and the strength of the current did for us the service our commander called upon us in vain to perform; it swept us free from the bank, and we again floated down the tide, — but, alas! only for a moment. With men at the oars to take advantage of the boat’s liberation, we might have easily profited by this providential circumstance, and made our way again into the middle of the river, and thus to safety. But no one thought of daring the peril of those fatal bullets, which swept the deck and perforated our flimsy bulwarks of plank. The broad-horn was left to herself, — to the current, which, having swept her from the bank, in one moment more lodged her among the branches of a fallen tree, a gigantic

sycamore, whose roots still embraced the bank, while its branches, stretched out like the arms of a huge polypus in the tide, arrested her in her flight, and held her entangled at the distance of twenty yards from the bank.

“ ‘ Is there a *man* in the boat ?’ yelled the disabled commander, perceiving this new misfortune, of which the Indians could be seen taking advantage, by endeavouring to make their way along the vibrating trunk to the boat : — ‘ is there a man who would rather take a wound, trying to save himself, by cutting loose from that tree, than die cowering like a butchered dog here in the bottom of the boat ?’

“ Nobody replied, save by looks, which each directed upon the other, full at once of solicitation and horror. The Colonel’s appeal was the signal for new yells and hotter volleys from the shore, by the latter of which the two horses, whose furious kicks and struggles had added to the terror of the scene, were soon

killed, affording a shelter by their bodies, behind which several of my comrades immediately took refuge.

“ ‘ Cowards !’ roared Colonel Storm, ‘ will none of you make an effort to save your lives ?’

“ He turned his eyes upon Captain Sharpe, who, one of the first to leap from the deck, now lay among the boxes as pale as death, and glaring in what seemed to me a stupor of fear. ‘ Sharpe, by G— !’ cried Colonel Storm, in tones of fierce reproach and indignation, ‘ do you call that acting like a soldier ? Up, like a man ! take an axe, and cut us loose,— or never more look on my daughter !’

“ Captain Sharpe made no other reply than by opening his eyes still wider upon the veteran, and looking even more ghastly than before ; upon which, Colonel Storm, bursting into a terrible rage, reviled him in furious language, as a ‘ base dastard,’ ‘ a mean sneaking villain’—in short, everything that was vile

and contemptible ; to all which the dishonoured soldier replied only by the same unmeaning and cadaverous stare.

“ In the mean while, the bullets were still showering among us like a driving rain, destroying more lives, and wounding the wounded over again ; while the savages, whose terrific yells were as incessant as the explosions of their guns, were approaching on the sycamore, to carry the devoted broad-horn by boarding.

“ ‘ A hundred dollars — a thousand ! ’ cried Colonel Storm, looking around him with eyes of mingled wrath and entreaty ; ‘ a thousand dollars to any man who will cut loose that cursed bough that holds us ! Hark, men ! a thousand dollars ! two thousand — ten thousand — all I am worth in the world ! do you hear, dogs ? all I am worth in the world. Do you hear me, villains ? If the savages board us, they will murder my daughter. All I am worth in the world to him that saves

her! — ay, and herself too! He that saves her shall have her to wife, with my whole fortune for her portion!

“ I know not what effect these frenzied words, wrung by paternal anguish from the old soldier, had in stimulating the spirits of those few in the boat who really possessed any power of resistance; but certain it is, several of the men immediately betrayed a disposition to obey the Colonel’s call, and attempt somewhat towards the salvation of their companions. Wounded by a shot through my left arm, which was, however, not a serious hurt, and, as I confess, as much overcome by fright as the others, I felt a sudden courage start in my veins, though such was the disorder of my whole mind, that I know not in reality whether it was incited by the great prize offered by my commander, or by a feeling of desperation, which, for a moment, took possession of me. I snatched up a rifle with one hand, and an axe with the other, and

sprang to my feet, with the full intention of cutting the boat loose from the tree, or of perishing in the endeavour; in which resolution, however, I was forestalled by a fellow-boatman named Parker, who sprang up before me, exclaiming with a profane levity both singular and shocking, considering his situation — ‘A wife and a fortune, or death and ——!’ and leaped upon the forecastle, from which he immediately fell backwards a dead man, having received a rifle bullet directly through the heart. His fall quenched the fire of my own courage, filling me again with dismay; and firing off my piece at a yelling savage, whom I saw, at that very moment, stepping from the sycamore into the boat, I cowered away among the cargo, as before, without even waiting to see the effect of my shot.”

“ ‘Villains and cravens!’ cried Colonel Storm, whom this mischance and failure seemed to drive into greater frenzy than before—

‘villains, who fear to face an Indian ! here’s work that will suit your cowardly spirits better : a thousand dollars to him that will enter the cabin, and blow my daughter’s brains out ! It is better she should die now than by the scalping-knife of an Indian !’

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN OF THE SPECTRE—THE DELIVERANCE.

“I HAVE no doubt, that in this hideous proposal, the poor distracted father, incapable of rising or moving, and, therefore, of yielding his daughter any protection, was quite in earnest ; but, of course, this call was as little likely to be obeyed as the other ; though it stung me into something like shame, that among so many men as we had still alive in the boat, there should not be one able or willing to strike a blow on behalf of a young and helpless woman. This shame nerved me anew with a kind of courage, which I had

immediately an opportunity of employing to advantage ; although certain I am it must have soon died away under the horrors that followed, had not aid and encouragement reached us from an unexpected quarter.

“Three Indians suddenly made their appearance at the bow of the boat, of whom one was still clambering among the shaking branches of the sycamore, while the two others sprang, with loud whoops, upon the forecastle. I fired my piece, which I had recharged at the first pulse of excitement, at the foremost Indian, who fell down among us in the agonies of death ; while a second shot, fired by some unknown hand from the river, took effect on his comrade, who also fell dead. At the same moment there sprang into the boat a figure in which I recognised, at the first glance—could I believe my eyes?—the phantom of the oar—that very spectre, on whose pallid forehead was wrapped a handkerchief spotted with crusted blood, whose ap-

pearance had been supposed to portend the calamity which had now overtaken us. The likeness to young Connor was now more apparent than ever ; and, indeed, extended even to the voice, with which the apparition, as he leaped upon the forecastle, exclaimed, in tones that thrilled us all to the marrow—‘ If you are not the wretchedest dastards that ever lay still to be murdered, up and shoot !—up and shoot !—while I cut the boat loose !’ With which words, he snatched up from the forecastle, where it had been dropt by the dying Parker, an axe, with which he immediately attacked, and, with a blow, struck down the third savage ; and then fell to work on the branch by which we were entangled, shouting to us, all the while, to ‘ fire upon the enemy,’ whose bullets, aimed at himself, he seemed entirely to disregard, while escaping them by a miracle.

“ ‘ It is Tom Connor himself !’ cried I, fired by his extraordinary appearance into such

spirit as I had never before felt — ‘give it to the dogs, and he will save us !’

“ I seized upon another gun, of which the dead and wounded had left enough lying about already loaded ; and backed by three other men, who now recovered their courage, let fly among a cluster of savages who were scrambling one over the other among the boughs of the tree. My supporters did the same ; and our shots, each telling upon an enemy, produced, among other good effects, a diversion in favour of our auxiliary with the axe ; who, still wielding his weapon, shouted to us to ‘leave our guns and take to the oars’ — a command that was obeyed by myself and one other boatman, who followed me to the deck.

“ We had scarce touched the oars, before the broad-horn swung free, and floated rapidly from the sycamore and from the bank.

“ ‘ Give way, and all are safe !’ cried our preserver, dropping his axe, and springing to

the steering-oar, with which he directed the boat into the centre of the river, calling all the time, though in vain, for others to come up and help at the oars. None were willing — and, alas! as we soon discovered, few were able — to help us; and the further labour, with the danger, of completing our escape, was left entirely to ourselves — to three men, each of whom stood fully exposed to the shots of the enemy, of which many a one took effect on our bodies. It was not, indeed, until we had put nearly the whole width of the river between the broad-horn and her assailants, and when the danger was almost if not entirely over, that we received any assistance. Three men, of whom one was entirely unhurt, the others but slightly wounded, then crept up, and took our places at the oars, which we were scarce able longer to maintain.

“ I turned to Connor — for Connor it was — who, crying out, ‘ Well done, Michael Law !

we've saved the boat, if we die for it'—fell flat upon his face on the deck, deprived of all sense, and, as I at first feared, of life. He was, indeed, desperately wounded in many places; having, besides the recent marks of combat, several wounds, one of which was on his head, that seemed to have been received several days before. Upon taking him up, I discovered he was still breathing, though faintly; on which, with the assistance of my comrades, I carried him into the cabin, where lay, or rather sat, the wounded Colonel; who, though aware of our escape from the Indians, was yet ignorant of the means by which our deliverance had been effected.

“ ‘ Bravo ! victory ! ’ he cried, with exulting voice, the moment he laid eyes on me; ‘ you’ve beaten the enemy, Mike Law, and I’ll make your fortune ! But what poor devil’s this you’re lugging among us, where there’s so many dead already ? ’

“ ‘ This,’ said I, ‘ Colonel ’—laying the young

man at his feet — ‘ is the true-blue that won us the victory — no less a man than your turned-off friend, Tom Connor.’

“ ‘ Tom Connor!’ cried he, looking with amazement upon the youth’s countenance, all pale and stained with blood; ‘ ’tis he, by heavens! But how came he among us?’

“ ‘ The Lord sent him,’ said I,—and said it very seriously; ‘ for, sure, he came in no mortal way whatever. All I know is, that he jumped right out of the river into the broadhorn, shot a savage as he jumped, picked up Sam Parker’s axe, and killed another; and then cut us loose from the sycamore, and steered us into the channel.’

“ ‘ What!’ cried Colonel Storm; ‘ Tom Connor do this? Tom Connor, that was such a fiddling, dancing, book-reading, verse-writing, womanish good-for-nothing? What! Tom Connor kill two Indians, when that cursed coward, Sharpe there, slunk away like a ducked kitten? Call my girl here! He shall

have her, and cut Sharpe's throat into the bargain. Throw the white-livered rascal overboard !"

" I turned my looks upon the dishonoured soldier, who lay, as I had left him, still cowering behind a box, with his eyes yet sending out a ghastly glare as before. Looking at him more intently, I perceived he was dead : indeed, he had received a bullet directly through the spine and heart, which had struck him while in the act of turning and leaping from the deck. I informed the Colonel of this mischance ; but he was now hugging and weeping over the wounded Connor, whom he swore he loved better than his own soul, and would never abuse again as long as he lived.

" The veteran then, being reminded of his daughter, bade me look her out in her cabin ; where, guided by the lamentations of her women, who burst into yells (for I believe they took me for an Indian) as I entered, I

found her lying in a swoon, into which she had fallen at the beginning of the action. Neither she nor her attendants had received any hurt, the little cabin being bullet-proof; and charging the latter to hold their peace, recover their mistress from her swoon, and then come to the assistance of the wounded men, I went again into the main cabin, and upon deck, to look upon the state of affairs, and examine into the extent of our losses. These were, indeed, dreadful. Of twenty men, nine were already dead, and all the others, one only excepted, severely wounded, four of them, as it was afterwards proved, mortally."

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION OF THE VOYAGE.

“ But enough of these melancholy details,” continued the narrator, looking around him. “ We are now upon the very scene of the calamity. Upon that bank, where now stands a flourishing town,” (it was the town of Portsmouth,) “ were hidden our murderous foes; upon yonder point lay the sycamore, in whose boughs we were entangled; and yonder, below, upon the Kentucky shore, is the cove into which we threw the bodies of nine men, our murdered companions. The recollection is saddening; and it comes to me still

more mournfully, surrounded by these hills, and those clumps of trees—the remnants of the old forest—which witnessed our disaster and sufferings. I will but mention a few other circumstances, and then have done with the relation.

“The death of Captain Sharpe, who, whatever were his faults, was undoubtedly no coward, (indeed, I afterwards discovered he had distinguished himself in some of the closing scenes of the Revolution,) afforded the best explanation of the supposed panic which had kindled the indignation of our old commander; and Colonel Storm himself used afterwards to tell me, he was shocked to think the reproaches and revilings he had given way to, were poured into the ears of a corpse. But, I am sorry to say, we found upon his body papers which fully established all the charges made against him by his runaway servant, and satisfied even Colonel Storm that, had he given him his daughter,

he would have wedded her to dishonour and misery.

“At the very moment when we were engaged casting his body into the river, we came up with and took possession of a drifting canoe; which threw, for the first time, a little light upon the riddle, hitherto inexplicable, of the sudden appearance of Mr. Connor. It contained a blanket or two, a store of provisions, ammunition, and other necessities, including a deal of superfluous clothing, all marked with Connor’s name. He had descended the Ohio, then, in a canoe, and alone!

“As this suspicion entered my mind, I be-
thought me of the phantom boat, following us by night; and was frightened to remember that I had made one of the superstitious party who saluted the solitary voyager with their rifles. I remembered also the spectre at the oar; and easily conceived that in that spectre, falsely supposed to be directing the boat ashore, I had seen poor Connor, who,

observing our deck deserted by the watch, and the boat drifting upon the point of land, had crept softly on board, and was urging her again into deep water, when my appearance drove him to flight.

“ These suspicions were all soon confirmed by Connor’s own confessions, made when he recovered his senses, and found himself again restored to the veteran’s favour. Though discarded, and with disgrace, at a moment of ill temper, which was perhaps increased by his own petulance, his heart was still with his benefactor, whom he resolved to follow to Kentucky; and finding no other means of descending the river, without waiting for the rise of waters that was to waft away the fleet of broad-horns, he formed the desperate determination to follow us in a canoe, which he had procured for the purpose; and in which, with a single companion, who, however, alarmed at the perils to be encountered, deserted him at Wheeling, he commenced the

voyage. From Wheeling, he had descended the river entirely alone.

“ He easily gained upon our boat, of which he often heard news, and all that he sought to know of his old patron, at our different stopping-places; but shame and other feelings, which a young, proud spirit may easily conceive, prevented his joining us, or making himself known; though they did not prevent his hovering near us by night, until the unfortunate volley we let fly at him, by which he had been actually wounded, taught him to preserve a more respectful distance. His fears and anxieties, however, on this night, (for he had also been told, at Gallipolis, of the dangers of the Scioto,) caused him again to approach the broad-horn; when, perceiving that all hands were asleep, and the boat in danger of going ashore, he had stolen aboard, and had just succeeded in making her clear the point, when discovered by me. In the confusion that followed, he easily slipped

back again into the canoe, and was hidden in the darkness of the night. From that moment, he had kept at a distance, until the sounds of conflict brought him to our side, to render us the service to which we owed our deliverance.

“Such was young Connor’s story, with which I may well close my own.

“A few hours after the battle we were joined by a fleet of boats, the same we had left at Pittsburg, which had passed the battle ground without loss, and now supplied us several fresh hands, with whose assistance we were able to keep them company, until the voyage was finished, early the next day, at Limestone, in Kentucky.

“Colonel Storm and Connor both recovered in a short time from their wounds; and so did I. And in two months after our arrival in Kentucky, I had the satisfaction of dancing at the wedding of the fair Alicia and her preserver.

“ I may add, that to the friendship, or gratitude, of these three individuals, all of whom seemed to believe I had, in some way or other, done them good service, I owed a change in fortune and condition — a commencement of happiness and prosperity, which have, I thank Heaven, followed me with unvarying and uninterrupted benignity up to the present moment.”

Thus ended the story of the Broad-horn. And here its chronicler takes his leave of the reader.

THE END.

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